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# **Near East/North Africa Report**

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11 August 1980

## NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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## CONTENTS

## INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

Attack Qadhdhafi Syndrome in Evidence at OAU Summit (Alex Rondos; WEST AFRICA, 21 Jul 80).....	1
PFLP Pledges Support to Libya (JANA, 24 Jul 80).....	4

## AFGHANISTAN

Soviets 'Withdraw' Only To Replace Wounded With Fresh Troops (JASARAT, 24 Jun 80).....	5
Success of Mujahidin Poses Threat to Russian Border (JASARAT, 19 Jun 80).....	6
Editorial Condemns Western Apathy Toward Afghanistan (Editorial; NAWA-I-WAQT, 16 Jun 80).....	8
Briefs	
Successor for Karmal	10
Watan Yar Made Commander	10
Sikhs Oppose Russia	10

## ALGERIA

Reportage on FLN Congress (IV) (EL MOUDJAHID, various dates).....	11
Principles, Men, by Kemal Belkacem	
Masses' Language, by Kamel Belkacem	
Only Road To Take, by Kamel Belkacem	
Responsible Democracy, by Kamel Belkacem	
Junction Reached, by Kamel Belkacem	
National Charter, by Kamel Belkacem	

## EGYPT

Survey of Petroleum Scene in Egypt by Oil Minister (Ahmad 'Izz al-Din Hilal; AL-BATRUL, Feb-Apr 80).....	20
Briefs	
Al-Sadat Visits European Capitals	26
'Important Political Case' Announcement Expected	26

## IRAN

Iranian Students in Ankara Arrested After Protest March (PARS, 29 Jul 80).....	27
Background of New Naval Commander Published (IRAN POLITICAL DIGEST, 7 Jul 80).....	28
Government Launches Program To Buy Farm Products (BAMDAD, 26 Jun 80).....	29
Briefs	
Bomb Explosion in Ahvaz	32
'PARS' Reports 'AFP' Apology	32
Execution of 'Iraqi Agents'	32

## IRAQ

Lebanese, Iraqi Ba'thists Attack Iraq; Iraqi Mujahidin Reported (AL-SAFIR, 10, 20 May 80).....	33
Saddam Is Like al-Sadat	
Iraqi Ba'thists Oppose Regime	
Iraqi Mujahidin in Lebanon	
Briefs	
Italian Ship Purchases	38

## ISRAEL

Peres on PLO, Jerusalem, Relations With Arab States (Shimon Peres Interview; DIE WELT, 5 Jul 80).....	39
--	----

## LEBANON

Shi'ites Strongly Opposed to Palestinian Resettlement (Lucien George; LE MONDE, 31 May 80).....	45
--	----

## MAURITANIA

Special Criminal Court Opens in Nouakchott (CHAAB, 4 Jul 80).....	48
--	----



Opening of Special Criminal Court Hailed (Editorial; CHAAB, 4 Jul 80).....	50
QATAR	
Amir Issues Law on Use of Telecommunications Equipment (Doha Domestic Service, 30 Jul 80).....	52
SUDAN	
Sudan-Ethiopia Committee Reaches Agreements, Mutual Understanding (AL-AYYAM, 13 May 80).....	53
SYRIA	
Progressive National Front, Opposition Party Roles Analyzed (Michel al-Nimri; AL-SAFIR, 19-24, 31 May 80).....	59
Main Foreign Policy Concerns Reviewed (AL-MUSTAQBAL, 17 May 80).....	107
Laws To Implement Resolutions of Peoples' Congresses Anticipated (Michel Nimri; AL-SAFIR, 19 May 80).....	109
Communist Party Congress Reflects Bakdash (AL-SAFIR, 4 Jun 80).....	111
Briefs Military Exercise Completed Satisfactorily	113
TUNISIA	
Last Political Prisoners Due for Release (Michel Deure; LE MONDE, 31 Jul 80).....	114

ATTACK QADHDHAFI SYNDROME IN EVIDENCE AT OAU SUMMIT

London WEST AFRICA in English 21 Jul 80 pp 1327-28

[Article by Alex Rondos]

[Text] President Senghor attacks Libya--and several others. Hissen Habre, apparently with support from France, is also a vocal channel for anti-Libyan diplomacy. This all makes for a peculiar diplomatic configuration which Alex Rondos describes.

LIBYA is training a force of 5,000 men, under the future leadership of Ahmat Acyl, currently the Foreign Minister in Chad's government of National Unity, in order to destabilise "four negro-African states of the Sudano-Sahelian zone, Chad, Niger, Mali and Senegal, according to President Senghor. He had called a news conference on July 14 to elaborate on his previous accusations against Libya, with which Senegal broke off diplomatic ties earlier in the month. He also attacked the Polisario Front.

He alleged that the Libyan authorities have not permitted 17 Senegalese who had taken refuge in their embassy in Tripoli before it closed, to return home from Libya. The President said that the Senegalese had been abused by followers of M. Ahmet Khalifa Niasse, the "marabout of Kaolack", who tried to tempt the men with offers of work in Libya. Niasse had also tried to form a movement to make Senegal an Islamic Republic. Since February he has enjoyed the protection of Col. Gaddafi. President Senghor threatened that if the 17 Senegalese are not freed to return to their own country by the end of July he would submit a complaint to the UN Security Council.

However, the President went further by accusing Libya of setting up an army of 5,000 men to destabilise the four countries of Chad, Niger, Mali and Senegal. They are to be led by Ahmet Acyl who is Foreign Minister of Chad in Goukhouni Weddeye's Government of National Unity. Acyl has been very closely associated with Libya for well over a year after Col. Gaddafi decided to cease supporting Goukhouni's FROLINAT, as it then was. Although the President offered no evidence of this plan, officials in Dakar have said that one of the major reasons for the diplomatic break with Tripoli was the knowledge that between 200 and 300 Senegalese have recently been recruited for training in Libya. This is compounded by Libya's support for the Muslim movements in Senegal, such as Niasse's.

Nor was Libya spared on the question of the Western Sahara. Referring to the majority among OAU member states which recognised the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, he said: "If a majority of the OAU has recognised the Polisario, let me say that it is not because of ideological grounds, but because of Libyan petro-dollars." This is a stunning public accusation — which might have once been made about Libya's persuasion of some African countries to break ties with Israel some years ago — but it is all the more surprising in that it follows hard on the Moroccan threat issued a few days before that it would break off relations of "co-operation with those which

manifested their hostility to Morocco in so far as territorial integrity is concerned, such as Iran and Togo." He also had in mind Mali and Chad which have been much more enthusiastic supporters of Polisario. However, it will rankle in Lomé that the Senegalese leader's public insinuation should come so closely after King Hassan's threat. Morocco is a major exporter of phosphate to most African countries and has close links with Togo's phosphate industry.

To add to his attack on Libya, President Senghor returned to his old refrain, accusing Polisario of systematically executing the black soldiers that have fought against it in the past in the Moroccan and Mauritanian armed forces. He maintains that the Polisario Front is not releasing its many Mauritanian prisoners because when they are released it will be seen that they will all be Moors. The blacks, by implication, will have been killed rather than taken prisoner.

So, with a massive diplomatic swipe at Libya — which tends to be impervious to these attacks — President Senghor has managed to bloody some other diplomatic noses. Another way of putting it would be to say that the dispute between Libya and Senegal is concerned as much with the whole region as it is with the bilateral relations between Dakar and Tripoli.

Another side of the coin, granted that Libya's diplomatic and military intentions in Africa are to be regarded with great circumspection, is that President Senghor's attack on Tripoli fits in, perhaps by design, with a much broader diplomatic front against Gaddafi. The focal point of this campaign is in Chad. The accusation about Ahmat Acyl, who happens to be allied to Goukhouni in the civil war against Hissèn Habre in N'Djamena, amounts to a bitter attack on the Government of National Unity in Chad. Supporters of Goukhouni have complained bitterly at attempts, often supported by Dakar, to introduce Habre's spokesmen to international meetings like the OAU. The attack on Libya, however, also coincides with recent developments in Chad.

That Habre has always been regarded by France as the best bet for N'Djamena is beyond doubt, and more important, Goukhouni and his supporters believe this to be the case. However, now that the latest round in the war has gone on long enough for the international media to cease to find in it a "story", correspondents have left and the sources of information have dried up. This opens the way for misinformation

to be spread. For example, Agence France Presse is reporting solely on the basis of information supplied by sources in the Habre camp. Three recent stories illustrate this. Two separate reports on the recent attempt by the FAP of Goukhouni and its allies to recapture the Camp 13 which is on the dividing line between the two armed camps in N'Djamena have been based entirely on Habre sources. It was claimed that Adoum Yacoub, director of the Presidential office, was seriously wounded and that a Libyan officer, Monsour Abdelaziz, "was taking command of all operations against the forces of M. Habre." In another story, a Habre source claimed that Nigeria was sending "massive aid" to Goukhouni's forces. A FAN spokesman, the report continued, also attacked the Cameroonian government in Yaounde for allowing the reported Nigerian aid to transit through Northern Cameroon.

It was Habre sources which in May had alleged that three columns from Libya were moving down to N'Djamena to support Goukhouni. The story has since died away. Goukhouni's supporters in the Forces Armées Populaires are more precise on this point; Ahmat Acyl is supported by Tripoli and as the fighting has continued in Chad he has brought reinforcements down from the North. However any suggestion that there are Libyans among these men are strenuously denied. It is also forgotten too easily, while everyone's attention is focused on N'Djamena, that Goukhouni still has a large proportion of his forces in the North of the country which they occupied, then as one of the major wings of FROLINAT, early in 1979.

The one story to emerge that has been critical of Habre and which was datelined in Lagos, was the report that Ousman Djidda, a FAN official responsible for "Arab relations", had defected saying that Habre was solely responsible for the fighting in Chad. FAP sources, while not denying the report, also say that Djidda's own motives are not entirely to be trusted. That a Habre defector goes to Lagos to announce his action is of course an indicator of where the diplomatic lines over Chad might be drawn. It remains, however, that France is very closely identified with Habre. Goukhouni's supporters claim that France is able to trace FAP troop movements and they also allege that FAN is receiving military aid from the French bases through Northern Cameroon where they withdrew after Goukhouni requested the withdrawal of the French

troops from his sector of N'Djamena. Unless reporters go to the FAP headquarters in N'Djamena they tend to be isolated at Maroua or Garoua in Northern Cameroon at the French Headquarters. To what extent many of the reports on the fighting are vetted by the French military authorities is not clear. But, again, FAP feel that this has become very much the practice.

## Evidence of concerted attack

The effect of President Senghor's attack on Libya, and his obvious distaste for the present governmental alliance in N'Djamena, and the manifest French favouring of Habre has been to indicate that there is a concerted diplomatic effort which may not have been planned but was at least, dictated by circumstances, with its main target as Libya and anyone thought to have too close an association with Tripoli. For the French, the Senegalese attack will have come as a welcome expression of diplomatic support and the *quid pro quo* could be that France must show a more aggressive diplomatic stand against Libya in support for its other African friends, President Senghor being foremost among the latter. France recently miscalculated, according to some observers, by refusing to acknowledge Goukhouni as the one man capable of implementing national unity in Chad. It is often said that Kamougue, the leader of the southerners in Chad, continues to support the Government of National Unity on the condition that Goukhouni remains at its head. All this has been seen as a let down by France's allies. The dangers are that a vicious cycle of diplomatic obligations and bartering is going to result in the prolongation of the conflict in Chad rather than a resolution. The FAP is more reluctant than ever to have a peacemaking force installed in Chad, whether it is composed of African or UN troops. This, they claim, would merely lengthen Habre's resistances. FAP believes it has the beating of Habre and is very conscious that once the battle in N'Djamena is over, should it win, it will have to turn its attention to keeping Libya at bay.

INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

PFLP PLEDGES SUPPORT TO LIBYA

LD240930 Tripoli JANA in English 0852 GMT 24 Jul 80

[Text] Beirut, July 24, Jamahiriya News Agency--The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) pledged its firm solidarity with the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya against any offensive by the Egyptian president against the Libyan Arab people. The PFLP expressed deep appreciation for the great al-Fatah revolution and its achievements and daring stands towards liberation of Palestine and the occupied Arab territories.

The statement was issued in Beirut yesterday following a visit made by a PFLP delegation to the Jamahiriya between 14 and 17 July current.

The statement pointed out that the delegation held several contacts and meetings with the brothers in the Jamahiriya. The statement also referred to the meetings between the General Union of the Jamahiriya's students with the PFLP Student's Bureau where both sides showed intentions to continue cooperation in the student's sector and agreed to coordinate and exchange views on students activities inside the Arab world and abroad and joint activities in that respect.

The statement confirmed support to the Armed Palestinian Resistance for the Liberation of Palestine and backing the uprising of the masses inside the occupied land as well as backing the steadfastness of the Palestinian resistance and the patriotic movement in southern Lebanon.

The statement concluded by condemning the plans aiming at aborting the resistance and abolishing the national identity of the Palestinian people.

CSO: 4802

## AFGHANISTAN

### SOVIETS 'WITHDRAW' ONLY TO REPLACE WOUNDED WITH FRESH TROOPS

Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 24 Jun 86 pp 1, 8

[Article: "Real Purpose of Russian Withdrawal is to Replace Wounded With Fresh Soldiers; Big Show of Withdrawal of One Division and 108 Tanks; Fresh Army of Ten Thousand Soldiers Sent to Kabul Within a Week; Withdrawn Units had Failed Against the Mujahids "]

[Text] Moscow 23 June--The real purpose of the Russian withdrawal from Afghanistan is to remove the tired, wounded and sick soldiers and replace them with fresh men. Commenting on the withdrawal announcement circulated by TASS, diplomatic sources said the present situation in Afghanistan should be kept in mind. The Russians have taken full control of Afghanistan, and the government is run by Russian advisors. But the Mujahidin are still fighting hard, and in spite of their limited resources, have managed to inflict heavy casualties on the Russians, and have made their lives miserable. According to some reports, ten thousand Russian soldiers have arrived in Afghanistan at the beginning of this month. These soldiers have taken over the duties of the departing soldiers.

According to a Russian announcement, Russian soldiers are leaving via the Salanor Pass. According to this report, a division consisting of 10,000 soldiers and 108 tanks will leave from Kabul to Moscow. An observer reportedly saw two hundred trucks and one hundred tanks heading north from Kabul. The sound of fire was heard all day long today in Kabul and its environs. Some sources think that it was in celebration of the Russian withdrawal. Some sources declare this act of the Soviets is staged to make the Olympic games more successful by getting West German and American athletes involved. According to other diplomatic sources, this step was taken to create a different atmosphere on the eve of the conference of the leaders of seven nations. This source also said that even now there are about 110,000 soldiers and 4,000 Russian tanks in Afghanistan. Western sources report that this army is composed of four regiments: one tank regiment, one airborne unit, and two missile units. The western sources also said that these units are not needed in Afghanistan, since these are not armored units effective in fighting the Mujahidin.

7997

CSO: 4203



**SUCCESS OF MUJAHIDIN POSES THREAT TO RUSSIAN BORDER**

Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 19 Jun 90 pp 1, 6

[Article: "Kazi Hussein Ahmed Says Success of Mujahidin Engangers Russian Western Borders, Communists Should Learn from Fates of Daud, Taraki and Amin"]

[Text] Lahore, 18 June--Kazi Hussein Ahmed, leader of the Majlis-e-Khidmet-e-Islami, said here today that the whole Afghan nation has risen against the Russian aggression, beaten this aggressor badly in only a few weeks, and made Afghanistan a dangerous place for them. He said this while addressing a gathering here today. Mr Kazi Hussein Ahmed advised the Pakistan communists to learn from the experiences of Taraki, Amin, Daud and Karmal, and Russia to change its policy.

In discussing the situation in Afghanistan, Kazi Ahmed said that the Mujahidin started their anti-communist activities in the border area of Pakistan. Nooristan became independent during the reign of Taraki. The Russian armies could never enter it. Paech and Shinghal Passes in the Kinnar area are the strongholds of Afghan Mujahidin. The Russians attacked here three times and pushed the Mujahids back, and the local population had to take refuge in Pakistan. The Russians, however, had to leave that area last month after facing many problems. The Afghan governor asked the Russians why they were leaving him helpless. The Russian commander replied that the Russians were restricted to their tanks, since the local people did not approve of them, and, therefore, had to leave.

Kazi Ahmed further said that the whole Afghan nation is against the Russian intruders. The Russian army can live only in well-protected cantonments or in tanks. He further said that the Russians wanted to establish a good transportation system in Afghanistan. The roads linking Kabul with Kandas, Mazar, Kandhar, Herat, Jalalabad and Peshawar are important highways. The Russians, inspite of all their army, could not make these highways safe. Cars and trucks go in caravans with helicopters flying overhead.

Kazi Ahmed said that the war has spread everywhere. Fighting is going on in the Russian border areas of Badkhsah, Kandas and Mazar Shareef; the

Iranian border areas of Herat; and in areas near the Pakistan border. The Russians are in great trouble. The Russians are restricted to their contingents, because of Mujahidin control from Kinner to the Russian border.

The struggle of Afghan Mujahidin has entered a new phase after the demonstrations in Kabul, Jalalabad and Herat. The Russians feel a threat to their western border, and have started killing people in this weak nation. Commenting on Afghan politics, Kazi Ahmed said that the Afghan communists are fighting among themselves. The rift between the Parcham and Khalq parties resulted in the murders of Daud, Taraki and Amin. The mutual hatred is so great that a governor is killed by the members of these parties almost daily (sic). There are no communists left in the rural areas. There is no way a communist government can be established in Afghanistan. The Russians will have to leave Afghanistan.

Kazi Ahmed said that the Afghan Jihad movement is to protect Pakistan and the Islamic world. Pakistan should support it at the national level. In answer to a question, Kazi Ahmed said that America is also against the Mujahidin, and wants a government of secular and westernized people here. The Americans are downplaying the Mujahidin and their movement, and labeling it as pointless warfare, he said.

7997

CSO: 4203



## AFGHANISTAN

### EDITORIAL CONDEMNS WESTERN APATHY TOWARD AFGHANISTAN

Lahore NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 16 June 80 p 2

[Editorial: "World's Silence about the Massacre in Afghanistan"]

[Text] According to Kabul Radio, a special tribunal has passed death sentences on three former ministers (of the period of the late president Hafizullah Amin). They are accused of conspiracy against the government, and of killing their opponents during their rule. This is the second report of this kind within five days. Radio Kabul had announced on 9 June that a so-called tribunal had passed death sentences on two close relatives (and partners in power) and ten senior officers of Hafizullah Amin.

The reaction of the outside world to these sentences is that inspite of the current fighting, the communist elements who are in power in Kabul are getting rid of their own old friends who belong to a different school of thought, are opposed to the tyrannical rule that followed the Russian aggression, or are feared to become favorite pawns of the Russian rulers.

This system of special tribunals (which act as judge, witness and executioner at the same time) to purge Kabul represents a communist philosophy, character and methodology. Under this system, whenever a person or a group gains power, even old friends and followers who do not agree with that person or group, or who represent a threat to the new regime, are persecuted along with the common people in order to establish fear of the government in their hearts. No consideration is given to the importance of the services of persons to be eliminated. Events in Kabul after the communist revolution follow the precedent set by Russia and other communist countries in getting rid of their own partisans. This kind of government makes leaders depend on mercilessness, hypocrisy, dishonesty, intrigue and unscrupulousness in climbing to power. In the light of this, the dreadful attempts to purge different communist groups in Kabul is not surprising.

The way Russia, following its military action against this democratic country, started merciless attacks against the common people; the way cities and villages are converted into ruins with indiscriminate bombing by planes, tanks and cannons; the way freedom fighters are subjected to merciless

tortures, and even young boys and girls are treated inhumanely--offers a challenge to the whole world.

In this regard, the speech of Iran's foreign minister Sadeq Qotbzadeh at the recent Socialist International Conference in Oslo deserves the attention of humanitarians throughout the world. He said that there is so much noise about the 53 Americans taken hostage in Iran, but no one raises any voice against the Russian aggression in Afghanistan which resulted in the death of hundreds of thousands of Afghans.

If instead of Islamic Afghanistan, some western christian country had become the victim of Russian atrocities, the whole western media would have started a crusade of protests and condemnations echoed at the UN, and human rights organizations would have become very active. But since Russia is killing people in a Muslim country, the Western world, instead of exhibiting natural human sympathy, is demonstrating a marked degree of apathy. Western news media report that Russia has not only transferred hundreds of Afghan political prisoners to the infamous labor camps, but has sent 400 demonstrating girl-students to Russia as prisoners. Afghans by the hundreds are being buried alive in deep ditches, or are thrown into rivers with their hands tied. However, the proponent of human rights, the western world, is not heeding all these horrible events.

7997

CSO: 4203

## AFGHANISTAN

### BRIEFS

**SUCCESSOR FOR KARMAL**--Jiddah, 21 June--Afghan military cadets undergoing training in India have refused to work for the puppet government of Karmal in their country. This news was published in the English daily ARAB NEWS OF JIDDAH. According to this report, the Mujahidin claim that many cadets who have finished their training in the Delhra Dun Academy have joined the Mujahidin in the Jihad movement. The report further says that a prominent member of the Afghan army, Gen Abdul Qadir Mangal, has flown to Moscow. This indicates a rift in the ranks of the Khalq party. The Russians have hinted at replacing Karmal with Gen Abdul Qadir. It is said that he has been moved to Moscow for his safety. [Text] [Karchi JASARAT in Urdu 23 Jun p 1] 7997

**WATAN YAR MADE COMMANDER**--New Delhi, 6 June--Tourists arriving here report that Mohammed Aslam Watan Yar has been sent to Kandhar province as a regiment commander to fight the Mujahidin there. Mr Watan Yar played an important part in former president Noor Mohammed Taraki's rise to power. He was made a minister in the Taraki government, but when Hafizullah Amin came to power, he was put in prison. Later, the Babrak Karmal government released him, and made him minister of communication. Recently there were rumours of Watan Yar being made successor to Karmal. [Text] [Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 7 Jun 80 p 1] 7997

**SIKHS OPPOSE RUSSIA**--Lahore, 16 June--Sikh tourists arriving here from Afghanistan to take part in the Jour Fair have condemned the presence of the Russian army in Afghanistan. The group leader, Kartar Singh, told newsmen that it was peaceful in Jalalabad, but there were riots in Kabul. He said that Afghan citizens and Mujahidin were very active in the villages around Herat and other large cities. All Afghans, be they Sikhs or Muslims, supported them. He said that the Sikhs did not oppose the present government, but were against the Russian occupation of the country. However, the Sikhs did not want to take part in the struggles for independence. He appealed to the Pakistan government to assist the Afghan Sikhs to go to India via Pakistan. These Sikhs came to Pakistan via the Torkhum route. [Text] [Lahore, NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 17 Jun pp 3, 10] 7997

REPORTAGE ON FLN CONGRESS (IV)

Principles, Men

Algeria EL HOUDJAHID in French 15 Jun 80 p 1

[Commentary by Kemal Belkacem]

[Text] The Special Congress of the FLN begins its sessions today, in compliance with the recommendations of the 4th Party Congress. No one can miss noticing that this event is drawing the keen attention not only of political observers but especially and fundamentally that of our people, for whom it proposes to translate into actions their legitimate aspirations for a better life. Chapter VIII of the National Charter in fact clearly affirms that "in an initial phase, the fundamental purpose of socialism is to provide, as a minimum, each citizen with a pattern of consumption corresponding to the standards of a decent life: housing, food, clothing, health, education for children, culture, recreation. Once the fundamental needs of the masses have been satisfied, economic growth will enable all Algerians to progressively achieve a higher quality of living."

What are the ways and means to get there? The draft 5-Year Plan being submitted today to several thousand congress members representing the basic forces of the nation contains answers to this question, which has been the subject in recent months of an in-depth debate at the national level, a debate conducted in complete freedom and democracy, which has reviewed publicly and without pulling punches the entire development experience of the last 12 years.

As first fruit of this review, which could not be delayed indefinitely without endangering the very foundations of our economic and social conquests, scientific planning, worked out democratically, i.e. taking into consideration the essential needs of the masses, and absolutely necessary, is thus confirmed--as the Charter emphasizes--as the prime instrument for managing the economy and as the means for equitable distribution of the fruits and burdens of development.

Let us not forget that the reform of 19 Jun 1965, under the direction of the late Houari Boumediene, by taking control of and clarifying the basic aspirations of the masses, enabled Algeria to make a decisive leap forward by freeing us from the reins of economic colonialism and by instituting powerful socialist structures, the very ones which will enable traversing a new stage in the socialist road and guaranteeing new victories for the Algerians.

If there was no question of breaking away from the development strategy pursued until now, the time had, however, come to proceed to a precise evaluation of an extremely heavy and rapid development phase and to "define the qualitatively new tasks which the Revolution must undertake and which condition the success of the socialist order." In other words, and in conformance with the resolutions of the 4th FLN Congress, socialism has to be given its practical content.

The National Charter precisely defines this coherent framework by supplying the theoretical content which was missing in the days after the regaining of independence. The sole ideologic source of reference, the Charter, through its correct analysis of the process of national liberation and its components, guarantees the "liquidation of the objective structures of exploitation, the satisfactions of the fundamental needs of the masses" and a unified and total action toward progress, social justice and dignity. Such were the ideals for which hundreds of thousands of martyrs died in November 1954.

It is within the National Liberation Front, which has been the promoter and the artifice of a victory of inestimable scope over colonialism and imperialism, that the new Algeria has been forged, the independent and modern Algeria, bearer of the emancipation message to all peoples which are enslaved or on the road to liberation.

The National Liberation Front, the front-line party in the management and organization of the people, is quite naturally the crucible for all the thinking elements striving toward the realization of socialism, selected from within the social forces of the Revolution who accept the monolithic discipline of the Party, who are united with the Party and its leadership, who engage in criticism and self-criticism and see to the rigorous selection of leaders at all levels.

At the time the Special Congress of the FLN is meeting, which has as the second item on its agenda the draft revision of the Party by-laws, the national demand for Party renovation formulated during the Charter debates, is a very hot topic. The FLN ought to take charge of this demand by the masses under the aegis of a revolutionary directorate so as to reply to the requirements of a stage of consolidation and expansion of the socialist gains.



The expected second wind should be born in the heart and within the framework of the Party, which is actually entrusted at present with orientation and control tasks, given the necessary adjustments and corrections inherent in the evolution of the Revolution in all areas.

But for this--and the Central Committee doubtless discussed it yesterday--the Party must above all reinforce its ideologic unity. Something which implies on the part of its members, from the base level to the administration, an ideological and political profile in harmony with the national Charter and its socialist content. If this commonality of views or ideas begins to be questionable, it is the duty of this Party to strengthen its ranks by separating itself from "those who transgress the principles of the Revolution or compromise its ideals." The strength of the FLN, the Charter reminds us, lies in its indissoluble bond with the people, hence the necessity for the Party to gain its confidence, to set the example by the behavior of its cadre and activists, to influence the masses by hard work and militant action.

These are the basic principles which, applied rigorously, will enable mobilizing the citizens for the realization of the Five-Year Plan and aiming for a better life.

It is to this end that the cultural awakening and expansion activities should be structured, which have been lacking to date and which are appearing in their full scope now that they are among the legitimate preoccupations of the citizens. This does not mean that the Algerian Revolution is safe from all danger, whether from without or within. The most responsible attitude, thus the most internally consistent, is to act within the system from a continual improvement of the political conditions for application of the national Charter. In the current stage, the Charter enlightens us as to the dangers to which our Revolution is exposed and for which we must watch out:

--Those who set themselves up as guardians of the Revolution and the people;

--Ideological vacuum which is liable to give rise to indifference and demobilization and to open the gates wide to the "enlightened" or "Johnny-come-lately revolutionaries," to careerism....

--The tendency toward populism and radicalism, factors which propagate demagoguery, opportunism and absence of rigor, signs of infantile spontaneous activism.

Thus, more than ever, the time has come for a motivated mobilization of all the energies and potential of the nation. The chance for a better life is in our hands. It begins by putting "the right man in the right place."

## Masses' Language

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 17 Jun 80 p 1

[Commentary by Kamel Belkacem]

[Text] For all those Algerians who, thanks to television, have lived the first moments of the Special Congress of the FLN at its official opening by the president of the Republic, the greatest impression was the atmosphere of patriotic fervor reflected by the presence of 3,998 congress members from every corner of the country.

Another way of looking at this Congress is through the expression of that child who is the star of the Congress' poster, put up all over the towns and villages, an expression charged with innocence toward the future of Algeria at work, toward the radiant era which shall not fail to come if Algeria takes up this new challenge of the 5-year plan.

The national anthem sung by the congress members, the objective and closely listened-to speech of President Chadli, who is personally directing the work, the reports presented by the delegates from the wilayas and the mass organizations (the one by the Mujahideen opened the series and was heavily applauded for its content), all this has given a clear orientation to the objectives of this Special Congress, considered as the extension of the 4th congress of the FLN. The congress member who enters the hall sees a panorama where a huge national flag occupies the foreground of the stage, honored in the center by the seal of the 4th Congress showing the portrait of the late Houari Boumediene, placed between two panels representing the seal of the present congress.

At the entrance to the cupola, a portrait of President Chadli; under this white cupola, which was also the seat of the 4th Congress, are today being determined the broad orientations of the plan and the precise definitions which the governing body of the FLN is preparing to give to certain articles of the party by-laws, so that "this latter may be a faithful expression of the spirit of the national Charter and also be in harmony with the Constitution of the nation." This is the second item on the agenda of this session, which, the night before, upon motion by the secretary general of the FLN, saw a democratic debate begun in plenary session for the purpose of examining the amendment proposal already drafted by the Central Committee and submitted to the congress for adoption.

More than a hundred signed up for this debate, which yesterday promised to be very lively. One notes that the draft as prepared by a special commission and then debated by the Central Committee could have been presented as-is for adoption. The proposal of the president to open a debate in plenary session has been warmly welcomed and appreciated as a tangible expression of responsible democracy.

This feature we also find in the majority of the addresses of the speakers who have expressed the will of the people and of the militant base, their needs and their faith in the Political Administration of the FLN as the sole force capable of assembling the vibrant forces of the nation and facing the difficulties and problems, for the purpose of solving them, which the working masses are undergoing. It is precisely in this spirit that the evaluation operation has unfolded.

These problems can be surmounted by discipline within the Party and "thanks to the permanent mobilization and acute awareness displayed by the activists" and especially by the working masses.

We must not lose sight of the basic objective of the Special Congress, which is to supply the Party and the State with the political and moral strength, as well as adequate means, to fulfill the economic, social and cultural tasks aimed at satisfying first and foremost the needs of the masses and raising their standard of living.

Any actions outside this process, even when they seem to be based on the demands of the masses, can have no other result than to make the situation more confused and to slow the concrete implementation of the measures which the Congress alone is entitled to decide with full powers.

#### Only Road To Take

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 18 Jun 80 p 1

[Commentary by Kamel Belkacem]

[Text] By its often impassioned tones, the rigor and forthrightness of its speeches, the debate to which President Chadli invited the congress members during the night of Monday to Tuesday has been a high point of this Special Congress of the FLN. "A lesson in responsible democracy," said one delegate. It ended after four hours in unanimity, which reminds us of the prestigious moments of the national consultation concerning the National Charter.

What is, in theory, the extent of a marginal "mass movement" in face of such a debate where more than 3,500 delegates elected by the militant base of the FLN and the mass organizations have, either in the reports presented or via their addresses from the floor, expressed--and some of them did it with such excellence that it brought the entire hall to their feet--the profound conviction that the FLN Party was capable of assuming its historic tasks of direction, motivation and control, that it was capable itself, without taking any lessons in democracy from anybody, of setting in this area the finest example of freedom and responsible democracy and of understanding of the real aspirations of the masses toward a better life.

Thus, the Mujahideen taking part in the debate were in full form under such circumstances. Their addresses, all with militant frankness, were of such a high-level viewpoint--especially in the analysis of the avant-guard role of the FLN during the war of liberation and then in the socialist construction



stage--that they roused the enthusiasm of the thousands of congress members, who rendered to the FLN the homage and the respect due to that force, able to take charge of the necessities of the current stage, by opening its ranks to the sincere militants acting in the spirit of the national Charter, as well as showing itself unmovable and without favor toward those corrupt or deviationist persons who willing to separate themselves from the ideals and principles of the FLN. An appeal from the heart, which brought thunderous applause, was that of a congress member addressed to the president of the Republic: "We are with you, Chadli, and we will not tolerate those who speak in your name and in that of the FLN but act against you and the National Liberation Front."

Respect for democracy within the Party's sessions and the mass organizations, behavior of the cadres and militants, unity of ranks and language which must be reflected in militant action, these themes were used by the speakers to develop correct analyses--certain ones were much less so, and they found no approval in the congress hall--analyses which all agreed in telling of the immense hope which the people and its militants place in the strengthening of the Party, a Party to be consolidated and not to be rebuilt.

The debate on the draft amendment of the FLN by-laws progressed along these lines. The will of everyone is to achieve restoration of the confidence of the real militant powers--the artisans of November 1954 and the younger generation who have proved themselves within the Party and the mass organizations--and to take the radical measures for harmonizing actions with words. If there is a danger to be fought at the present time, it is that of a split personality. The official policy language and its opposite which some believe necessary to adopt to satisfy an audience. Being a leader in the Party and in the mass organizations necessitates an exemplary attitude under all circumstances, in conformity with the principles and statutory regulations.

This means that it will no longer be acceptable to have "one foot in the system" and another in some form of "opposition" which does not say its name and which reveals itself, in certain cases, to be very comfortable for its authors.

The congress members said all that, just as they demanded the cleansing of their own ranks, respect for the principles of responsible democracy, especially at the level of election practices, and gave proof of a clear vision of the imperatives of socialist development which the Five-Year Plan introduces for the purpose of moving the Algeria of 1980 along toward the satisfaction of the primary needs of the citizens and advancing toward social progress, the generalization of the national language and the expression of our faith in a progressive Islam.

The real application of the principle of "the right man in the right place"--the principle is also valid for the militants and citizens who believe in the options of this country--the fight against privilege, and equality before the law largely dominated the rest of the debate.

From this debate, as from the whole progress of the Special Congress, we must note the serenity and perfect cohesion which reigned among the congress members. The speech of the president of the republic enabled bringing things into focus, with regard to the decisions which the Congress is likely to make on the two matters on its agenda. They summarize perfectly the nature of the debate currently going on at the national level.

The president of the Republic acting alone is not enough. It is with the total engagement (addressing the congress members) and the support of all sincere parties who believe in our socialist options that it will be possible to cleanse the ranks and ensure the victory of the homeland, of the revolution. "We are living," said the president, "and will continue to live with respect for the principles of the FLN and the national Charter; that is the only road to follow."

The congress members cheered this address, which moreover influenced the progress of the debate until its completion.

#### Responsible Democracy

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 19 Jun 80 p 1

[Commentary by Kamel Belkacem]

[Text] A congress of revolutionary patriots from the FLN and its mass organizations, representatives of the workers' assemblies and the institutions, gathered together under the sign of a better life to be ensured for the citizens. They all have in common a fierce desire for national independence, social justice and progress. The Special Congress of the FLN which is taking place under the direction of the secretary general of the Party, President Chadli Bendjedid, bears witness to a responsible democracy which has been created by Algeria, its institutions and its political administration.

There will doubtless be revolutionary decisions issuing from this Congress, because the present stage requires them. They are the will of the nation's administration in conformance with the principles of the national Charter and the aspirations of the people. Their implementation will then be the business of all those who form the social forces component of the revolution. Each level of responsibility must thenceforth assume its responsibilities, with unity of ranks and by an exact translation of the principle of "the right man in the right place."

It must be pointed out that the 5-year plan which the Congress will adopt the orientations of is not a magic tray offering up solutions which can be quickly achieved. It is a contribution to the elimination of the problems of our society. This plan is the expression of the militant base in the name of the citizens aspiring toward a better and more just life.

When the congress members depart, after having objectively evaluated our needs and our capabilities for assuming them, then the real fieldwork will begin.

#### Junction Reached

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 20-21 Jun 80 p 1

[Commentary by Kamel Belkacem]

[Text] A century and a half after the colonial invasion of Algeria, 15 years after the revolutionary reform of 19 Jun 1965, the holding, day by day, of the FLN's Special Congress as an extension of the 4th Congress of the Party is not the result of chance.

The decision to hold these sessions from 15 to 19 June comes from the desire of the political administration, headed by President Chadli Bendjadid, to translate, by revolutionary decisions and in conformance with the expectations of the popular masses, the admiration which the entire Algerian people have for their martyrs and especially for the late President Houari Boumediene, whom the Special Congress has honored by paying him homage for his contribution to the establishment of a modern state which can outlive individuals and where the principles and the options of the people alone triumph. This is the greatest act of faith toward the memory of the deceased, namely continuation of his work in the service of the homeland and the revolution. It is also, taking a lesson from the Congress, this spirit which must prevail in order to safeguard our institutions and assure that the revolution can follow the course it must take.

The problem today is to know clearly what future we are preparing for our succeeding generations and whether we are working to hand on to them only the good example.

A colleague at the APS has analyzed this question very well, and this will be the conclusion of these comments: "This is precisely another point of remarkable junction, after that of the 5-year plan and men, namely that of the Mujahideen of the war of liberation with the first generations of the socialist order. The presence in the Congress of the former recalled to the latter the virtues of total commitment for a noble cause, of perseverance in effort, of denial and sacrifice, all values which enabled the Algerian people to seize its political independence and which will enable it to achieve a genuinely better life."

## National Charter

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 22 Jun 80 p 1

[Commentary by Kamel Belkacem]

[Text] The deepening and enriching of the FLN by-laws by the supreme organization of the Party, the Congress, in the sense of consolidation of the socialist order as specified by the National Charter, is an important contribution to the strengthening of the institutions of the Party and of the general lines of the Algerian revolution.

In the scope of the 5-year plan and the implementation of the decisions of the Special Congress appears the absolute necessity of specifying the true meaning of the guiding principles of the National Charter for their application. Thus, it is justly emphasized that "the key functions of responsibility at the state level are held by members of the Party administration while the other positions of responsibility with a political nature in the state are entrusted to militants."

The Charter likewise emphasizes: "The National Liberation Front is a front-line party. It is the organization of all the knowledgeable elements striving toward the realization of a common goal, the pursuit of a common action, and whose ultimate objective is the triumph of socialism. These chosen elements, especially at the level of the workers, the peasants and the youth, shall be the object of rigorous selection procedures."

This very precise ideological and political basis imposes even more rigor on the Party and the mass organizations, especially for the tasks of administration, mobilization and control.

The Special Congress has enriched and deepened article 120 concerning mainly the mass organizations by specifying that the responsibilities, within this framework, can be entrusted only to FLN militants, with it being left up to the internal organization of the Party to define the implementation modalities in order to ensure the initiative capabilities within the organizations and that the Party's role of stimulus, orientation and control not give rise to substitutions of activities.

9550

CSO: 4400

SURVEY OF PETROLEUM SCENE IN EGYPT BY OIL MINISTER

Cairo AL-BATRUL [JOURNAL OF THE EGYPTIAN GENERAL PETROLEUM ORGANIZATION]  
in Arabic Feb-Apr 80 pp 4-7

[Article by Minister of Petroleum Ahmad 'Izz al-Din Hilal: "A Quick Look at the Oil Situation in Egypt"]

[Text] The oft repeated question imposes itself in earnest: Will Egypt's dream of entering the ranks of the big oil states be revived?

In the Egyptian oil industry, a miracle has occurred in the Egyptian will, Egyptian dedication and Egyptian sacrifice.

The Egyptian oil sector has succeeded in pushing its targets ahead by an entire year. Egypt has achieved record levels in oil production, exports and revenues.

Since the mid-1960's, Egyptian officials have placed their hopes on the possibility of discovering and producing oil in Egypt in large enough quantities to make it an important oil exporting country and enable it to use its free currency revenues to strengthen the economic situation.

Will this hope be realized? What accomplishments has the Egyptian oil sector achieved along the way to achieving this goal? What is Egypt's oil future?

These questions are answered by the following survey, which deals with the various activities of the Egyptian petroleum industry.

In light of the basic goals and policy standards which were been laid down for the Egyptian oil sector and their results, this sector is certainly capable of achieving these hopes and goals with great success. In fact, it can be said in the context of the limited time which is available to achieve these goals that the oil sector has been able to push its targets forward by an entire year.



The hope has become a reality. Our oil income has begun a course which will lead to economic development projects and correction of Egypt's economic course.

There has been a miracle in the Egyptian oil industry involving the Egyptian will, Egyptian dedication, a strong feeling of belonging to Egypt and the Egyptian sense of sacrifice.

Nonetheless, officials responsible for the petroleum sector in Egypt feel that they are only at the beginning of the road. Immense efforts must be made and work must continue in the liberalized manner which forms the basis for the oil sector's operations so that we can achieve the ambitious goals which the oil sector has agreed to undertake.

#### Oil and Correction of the Course of the Egyptian Economy

In addition to meeting growing domestic consumption needs, the Egyptian oil sector has been able to carry out the role it has taken upon itself, namely, to become an important source of foreign currency.

The oil sector is estimated to have achieved a net income for Egypt of \$1.2 billion in 1979, and its net income for 1980 is expected to be approximately \$1.5 billion. In contrast, up until 5 years ago the sector was running a deficit which in 1974 amounted to \$215 million.

The goal announced 2 years ago was for the oil sector to realize a net income of \$800 million in 1979 and \$1.2 billion in 1980. This means that the oil sector was able to achieve its goals an entire year ahead of schedule, attaining in 1979 what it had been slated to attain in 1980.

From an analysis of the oil sector's net income for 1980, which will amount to about \$1.5 billion, the following things become clear:

1. The Egyptian petroleum sector realizes a net daily income for the Egyptian treasury of about \$4 million (The value of our daily production is about \$17 million. Some \$8-million-worth of this production per day goes to satisfy local demand for oil products, and about \$5-million-worth per day is used to cover imports by the oil sector, petroleum investments, and the share of the foreign participant. The remaining \$4 million per day represents net income).
2. The value of Egyptian oil exports accounts for 40 percent of the value of all Egyptian exports (both visibles and invisibles). Thus, oil has become the highest ranking commodity on our list of foreign exports.
3. This makes oil our most important source of foreign currency. The petroleum sector has achieved a dramatic shift in the net oil payments position from a net deficit to a growing net surplus.
4. The income derived from the petroleum sector represents about 20 percent of Egypt's national income.

With regard to the near future, the net income of the oil sector is expected to grow to over \$2 billion in 1983.

The following is a summary of the search and exploration position. It reveals the importance of the human element in this critical industry.

#### Crude Oil Production

--Egypt's production of crude oil and natural gas is currently approaching 600,000 barrels per day (including about 20,000 barrels per day of natural gas). This is a record figure for Egypt. By way of comparison, 6 years ago--i.e. in 1973--our production in this area stood at only 160,000 barrels per day. This means that oil production has quadrupled during these 6 years.

This indicates that Egypt has entered the target zone which it established for itself, which will bring production to 1 million barrels per day (50 million tons annually) as the 1980's begin.

--Evidence of the achievement of this target comes from the series of discoveries which has been made in the Gulf of Suez and other areas. Some of these discoveries have already been put into production, while the rest will be put into production in the near future after development operations are completed.

--Other evidence comes from the excellent oil possibilities enjoyed by Egypt.

--Additional indications are provided by the intensive activity in the field of petroleum exploration which is taking place in Egypt's inland and offshore areas. This activity is expected to lead to another series of discoveries during the next few years.

--The recovery of the Egyptian oilfields in the Sinai peninsula and the Suez Gulf confirms these indications and gives them additional weight.

On 25 November 1979, Egypt recovered from Israel the last of its oilfields in Sinai, the Shi'ab 'Ali offshore fields. Nine oilfields had previously been regained following our victory in the October war.

The recovery of these fields has helped bolster the Egyptian economy. They currently produce around 5 million tons annually and are yielding their production under Egypt's flag and subject to Egypt's will and administration.

The restitution of these fields is one of the fruits of the outstanding October war. They have made a significant addition to Egypt's exports and the volume of its oil revenues. But this is not all. The liberation of Sinai has meant a widening of the area of oil exploration activities and has enabled the international oil companies with which we have oil agreements covering areas in the Gulf of Suez to perform their obligations and thus make additional oil discoveries.

## Natural Gas

In addition to crude oil production, Egypt produces natural gases from three fields, which are the Abu Madi field in the northeast section of the Delta, the Abu al-Gharadiq field in the Western Desert, and the offshore field of Abu Qir. Egypt began its era of natural gas utilization following the discovery and development of these fields. Natural gas is without a doubt a vast national resource which is contributing to the industrialization of Egypt. Natural gas has begun to be used in the cement, fertilizer and iron and steel industries as well as in electric power generating stations.

However, the huge job--which will begin in the near future--will be the utilization of natural gas in homes as an alternative to butane gas. This will begin in four residential quarters of Cairo: Misr al-Judidah, Madinah Nasr, al-Ma'adi and Hulwan. On 22 November 1979, a contract was signed for the installation of the necessary pipeline systems to bring natural gas from the Abu al-Gharadiq fields in the Western Desert to the four residential areas mentioned.

As a beginning, natural gas is slated to be utilized in Egypt for the extraction of ethanegas and the production of ethylene. This will be a starting point for the Egyptian petrochemical industry which Egypt is attempting to launch. The studies necessary to achieve this have already been completed.

The possibilities for the discovery of additional natural gas fields are very great, according to the available information and some new discoveries.

In the future, natural gas will constitute an important source of energy in Egypt.

## Oil Agreements and Expansion of the Area of Oil Exploration

In its new era, Egypt believes in freedom of commerce and exchange. Under the policy of economic and political liberalization, Egypt has become an attractive market for foreign investments.

The Egyptian petroleum sector, which has been a pioneer in implementing the economic open door policy, has succeeded in attracting international and independent foreign oil companies. In the past 6 years alone, we have signed 52 oil exploration agreements with 33 international and independent companies from 13 different nations. Based on these contracts, these companies have obligated themselves to spend some \$1.19 billion on oil exploration activities over a period of 8 years.

In actuality, these companies are clearly spending much more than they have obligated themselves to spend in the contracts concluded with them.

The success of oil activity and the accomplishment of the oil sector's goals by the achievement of more oil discoveries can only be realized through



additional exploration and exploratory drilling operations. This requires additional expenditures and investments.

The signing of these agreements has led to expansion of the area subject to oil exploration operations to about 600,000 square kilometers. Up until a few years ago, exploration activity in Egypt was centered on the Gulf of Suez area, encompassing no more than 125 square kilometers in 1972. This is a small area in comparison to the total area in which oil is likely to be found (Egypt's total area is approximately 1 million square kilometers). In addition to the Gulf of Suez, areas presently under exploration include regions in the Red Sea and southern Egypt, which have not attracted the attention of the companies in the past. Exploration activity has also been extended to the Nile Valley, the Mediterranean Sea and the southern part of the Western Desert.

These agreements have resulted in 22 oil discoveries. Of these, four fields have been put into actual production and preparations for production are being made at five other discovery sites. The remainder of the discoveries are presently undergoing evaluation.

In view of the liberation of Sinai, the area under exploration for oil will expand, and with it the opportunity to increase oil possibilities will also expand.

#### Egyptian Oil Experts

The development of the oil industry in Egypt, as in every other Arab country, is based first of all on the availability of technical cadres in the various petroleum fields in sufficient numbers and with the needed capabilities to manage, monitor and coordinate the various operations in this industry.

The Egyptian petroleum sector has entered a new phase ushered in by expansion and development from limited activity to wide horizons extending to all parts of Egypt. Without a doubt, one of the most important responsibilities of this sector is to raise the potentials of its employees and human underpinnings in order to confront the rapid developments which characterize the oil sector and the large-scale activity which has become one of the industry's hallmarks in Egypt, not to mention meeting the needs of the Arab states and friendly developing states.

Our oil experts have worked and continue to work in the Arab countries and other countries, and have proven the competence of the Egyptian expert in this advanced industry as well as his ability to solve the problems facing him both at the planning level and at the implementation level.

The oil sector has formulated an ambitious plan to train workers. Some 33,000 workers have now been trained at various levels and in all petroleum fields. It would be no exaggeration to say that the secret of the Egyptian oil sector's success is the excellent human element on which it is based.

## A Wider Future

The Egyptian petroleum sector, which we have discussed in just a few of its many aspects, has a splendid future ahead of it. The Egyptian petroleum sector will, with God's help, achieve the ambitious goals set for it. In this way, it will make an effective contribution to the prosperity of the Egyptian people and to the building of the Egypt of the future.

8591

CSO: 4802

## BRIEFS

AL-SADAT VISITS EUROPEAN CAPITALS--Cairo, 27 July--ROSE AL-YUSUF MAGAZINE says in its Monday edition that President Anwar al-Sadat is expected to visit a number of European capitals for political talks of considerable importance. It adds that no final date has been set for the visit. [Text] [NC270710 Cairo Mena in Arabic 0649 GMT 27 Jul 80]

'IMPORTANT POLITICAL CASE' ANNOUNCEMENT EXPECTED--Cairo, 27 July--ROSE AL-YUSUF MAGAZINE says in its Monday edition that an announcement will be made soon regarding an important political case. It adds that the prosecution department has nearly completed its investigations and has released a number of the accused. [Text] [NC270712 Cairo Mena in Arabic 0648 GMT 27 Jul 80]

CSO: 4802

IRANIAN STUDENTS IN ANKARA ARRESTED AFTER PROTEST MARCH

LD291216 Tehran PARS in English 0739 GMT 29 Jul 80

[Text] Tehran, 29 - 1 (PARS News Agency)--The Foreign Ministry announced on Sunday that [wor ndistinct] Iranian student members of the Islamic Association residing in Ankara had been arrested by the Turkish security police. The students had gone to the (?Foreign Ministry) of Turkey to submit a resolution protesting against the Turkish Government's refusal to extradite the two Iranian officers who escaped to Turkey by helicopter.

In their resolution the students announced their full support for the decisive leadership of Imam Khomeyni and the Islamic Revolution.

They said that the two nations of Iran and Turkey had common ideals and good relations, and condemned any movement that might endanger this brotherly relationship. They called on the Turkish Government:

- 1--To extradite the two traitor officers to Iran.
- 2--Not to allow these two criminals to be given refuge in any other country especially the criminal U.S.
- 3--Not to issue residence permits to the two refugees without consulting Iran.
- 4--To ensure that the radio, television and mass media of Turkey refrain from any action liable to divide the two Islamic countries.

CSO: 4920

BACKGROUND OF NEW NAVAL COMMANDER PUBLISHED

Tehran IRAN POLITICAL DIGEST in English 7 Jul 80 p 18

[Text] Name: Bahram Afzali, Commodore, Dr.

Born: 1937, Qom

Present Position: G. O. C., Naval Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Family: Brought up in a religious family in Qom; Married with two children.

Education: Trained in the Italian Naval Academy, in the Mechanical Engineering field and ship-building; Holds a Doctorate degree.

Previous Occupation: Entered the service of the Iranian Naval Forces in 1957 and was sent abroad for further studies; On return to Iran in 1965, served in the Iranian naval ships in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, as well as at the Khorramshahr Naval Base; Later, he was appointed as Assistant to the Logistic and Personnel Command of the Naval Forces. After the detention of Admiral Alavi he was appointed as the Commander of the Naval Forces.

Foreign Languages: English, Italian, French.

Travels: United States and European Countries.

CSO: 4920

# GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES PROGRAM TO BUY FARM PRODUCTS

Tehran BAMDAD in Persian 26 Jun 80 p 10

/Article: "The Government's Program To Buy Agricultural Products Has Been Announced"/

/Text/ The program to buy agricultural products from producing farmers via the government this year has been announced. According to this program, the government will buy 80,000 tons of rice, 20,000 tons of grain, 75,000 tons of potatoes, 75,000 tons of onions, 25,000 tons of unginned cotton, 120,000 tons of citrus fruit, 50,000 tons of apples, 100,000 tons of dates and 1.2 million tons of wheat from farmers at guaranteed prices. In addition to that, the purchase price of wheat from farmers has increased by 2 rials per kilogram this year and the government will pay farmers 20 rials per kilogram of wheat.

Dr Sheybani, the minister of agriculture and rural development, and /sic/ Hadi Mo'tameni, managing director of the Central Rural Cooperative Organization and the deputy minister of agriculture, took part yesterday morning in a press, radio and television conference and placed information at the disposal of newsmen on the subject of some of the programs of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the purchase of crops.

In yesterday's conference, referring to the purchase of crops by the government, the minister of agriculture stated at the outset "With the help of the Central Cooperative Organization, the effort has been made for farmers' produce which remains in the farmers' possession at the harvest site to be purchased at a fair price. In this field, substantial aid has been given to the nation's farmers." Sheybani added, "The purchase price of wheat is not completely made by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development: the Economic Council determines it. For wheat to be purchased at a good price from farmers this year, the decision has been made for the wheat price to increase from 18 to 20 rials per kilogram, and the 2 rials which have been added to the price of the wheat will go to the farmers as a good production bonus."

He said, "In terms of wheat, the country has no shortage. According to the minister of commerce, wheat has been stored in adequate amounts." Regarding the high cost of commodities and the role of middlemen, Sheybani said, "As the fields for the sale of crops are expanded, the supply of goods from production to consumption will be assured. We are intending to inhibit intermediaries and loan purchasers. To this end, the municipality will engage in the necessary cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture."

Sheybani then referred to the meat question and said, "The government will supply meat at a uniform price in all provinces. The price of meat will become uniform throughout the country and the meat question will be solved to a large extent with the program which will be put into implementation."

In response to a question on the fact that it has been said that the government is intending to increase the price of meat, he stated, "In order to provide the consumer with cheap meat, the government is paying a differential of 20 billion rials per year on behalf of the consumer. This sum is disbursed only in Tehran and Esfahan, while people in other parts of the country are deprived of this type of government aid. If we want to establish such a differential on behalf of people in the entire country, the government will have to pay a subsidy figure in the range of 120 billion rials per year." He then said, "We are now intending just to devote the amount of the subsidy to expanding and encouraging the country's livestock rearing in the future. For this reason, if the price of meat is increased in the future, that will be normal, since the people are now buying fresh meat at 500 to 600 rials and sometimes 800 rials a kilogram, and the price which the government will set for meat is a fair price far below actual prices in the market."

After the statements by the minister of agriculture, Mo'tameni, the managing director of the Central Rural Cooperative Organization, announced the program to guarantee the purchase of crops from farmers. He said, "Attention must be given to the fact that the purpose of guaranteed government purchases is not for us to come and buy every crop, such as squash, vegetables, egg plant and so on. The government just buys nine basic commodities from the farmers; the objective is for the government by purchasing these commodities to give the necessary aid to farmers and avoid drops in their prices so that the farmers may engage in production comfortably, and, on the other hand, be secure that if their crops do not have a buyer in the market but remain in their possession the government will purchase them."

Referring to the nine commodities, which consist of rice, potatoes, onions, unginned cotton, apples, citrus (by citrus only oranges are meant), dates, wheat and grain, and which are bought from the farmers at guaranteed prices, he said, "Whatever volume of such commodities the farmers supply, the government will purchase them."

Mo'tameni said, "This year the government will buy 80,000 /tons/ of rice, 20,000 tons of grain, 75,000 tons of potatoes, 75,000 tons of onions,



120,000 tons of citrus, 50,000 tons of apples, 110,000 tons of dates, 25,000 tons of unginned cotton and 1.2 million tons of wheat from the farmers; 47.6 billion rials in credits have been provided for the purchase of these commodities."

In response to a question on what form the set price of the commodities takes, the managing director of the Central Rural Cooperative Organization said "The prices which have been set for the purchase of crops are: 80 to 125 rials per kilogram of high quality rice; 17 rials per kilogram of potatoes; 9 rials for onions, for unginned cotton, 45 rials; for citrus (oranges), five types, first class excellent, 55 rials, first class, 53 rials, second class 43 rials, and third class 31 rials (it is necessary to point out that in order to give help to downtrodden farmers who produce class three oranges, 2 rials are added to their prices every month;

"Dates, 27 rials, /and/ apples, first class, 44 rials, second class, 41 rials, and third class, 33 rials. Regarding the price of grain, one must state that since the type of grain varies by region, the rate for the grain will therefore vary according to its type." In conclusion, Mo'tameni said, "The rice purchased from farmers is being placed at the disposal of cooperative federations in order to be distributed to the people. The cotton will be sold entirely to the textile factories and the citrus will be transferred by the commercial company and services (as it has a cooler) and this will be supplied to the market at the appropriate time."

After the statements by the managing director of the Central Rural Cooperative Organization, the deputy minister of agriculture, responding to a question on the measures which had been taken to protect the country's forests and avoid the burning and cutting down of trees, said, "A committee has been chosen to oversee the forests, and the cutting down of trees has diminished through the necessary measures. In order to protect the country's trees, the decision has been adopted for a corps from the Army of Guards, by name of the Forest Corps, to take charge of protecting the forests."

Regarding the plan to spread mulch in saline areas, he said, "This year we will need credits of about 35 million tomans to spread mulch; agreement has been given to 17 million tomans of this." In regard to the plan to create rural service centers, the deputy minister of agriculture said, "The establishment of rural service centers has begun and, in order to accelerate the creation of these centers and the provision of the necessary services to farmers, use will be made of the resources and equipment of the former joint stock agricultural companies, which have now been dissolved." He added that the foundation for the plan to construct rural service centers was laid in the time of Dr Izadi, the former minister of agriculture; in the future this type of center will play a big role in agricultural progress and the provision of services.



## BRIEFS

**BOMB EXPLOSION IN AHVAZ**--Tehran, 30 Jul (AFP)--A bomb explosion today in the Khuzestan city of Ahvaz killed seven people and injured 30 others, the Iranian News Agency PARS reported. The bomb, left in the carrier of a motorcycle parked outside a city centre hotel in the capital of the oil-rich southern province, wrecked the hotel restaurant and broke all the windows up to the seventh floor but none of the guests or staff was among the casualties, a hotel spokesman said. [Text] [NC301024 Paris AFP in English 1007 GMT 30 Jul 80]

**'PARS' REPORTS 'AFP' APOLOGY**--Tehran, 30 Jul (PARS News Agency)--Head of the French New Agency in Paris in a letter to President Abolhasan Bani-sadr of Iran on Monday expressed his regrets for the transmission of a wrong report from an interview with the president. The letter reads: "An undeliberate mistake has been made in the transmission of a report by the French New Agency President Abolhasan Bani-sadr, in an interview with the LE MONDE reporter, Eric Rouleux. This report has offended Mr Bani-sadr, and the French News Agency hereby apologises to the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran for such a mistake." [Text] [LD301030 Tehran PARS in English 0755 GMT 30 Jul 80]

**EXECUTION OF 'IRAQI AGENTS'**--Tehran, 29 Jul (PARS News Agency)--The Abadan-Khorramshahr Islamic Revolutionary Court sentenced to death an Iraqi agent named Sanifpari, and the sentence was carried out at 17:40 hours on Sunday. In an announcement issued by the court it was said that the convict was one of the Iraqi mercenaries who had come to Iran among the deportees. He was an active member of the Iraqi Baathist [word indistinct] Union, and confessed that he had come to Iran to carry out espionage. In Khoy West Azarbaijan two women were executed on Saturday after having been sentenced for prostitution. [Text] [LD291110 Tehran PARS in English 0737 GMT 29 Jul 80]

CSO: 4920

LEBANESE, IRAQI BA'THISTS ATTACK IRAQ; IRAQI MUJAHIDIN REPORTED

Saddam is Like al-Sadat

Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 10 May 80 p 3

[Text] 'Asim Qansuh, the secretary of the [pro-Syrian faction of the] Socialist Arab Ba'th Party in Lebanon, said yesterday, "Iraqi President Saddam Husayn is another al-Sadat working for the signing of a new Camp David agreement." He called for expediting establishment of the National Front, and asked the National Movement and the PLO to follow in the footsteps of the Palestinian organizations which were quick to take up a clear pan-Arab position on the Iraqi regime.

This was stated in a speech Qansuh made during a banquet that he hosted yesterday noon at the Merryland Restaurant in honor of a delegation of the Iraqi Socialist Arab Ba'th Party. The banquet was attended by Dr 'Abdallah Sa'adah, Muhsin Dalul, In'am Ra'd, Riyadh Ra'd, Fawwaz Tarabulsi, Usamah Fakhuri, 'Abd-al-Rahim Murad, Muhammad Qabbani, Nasir al-As'ad, 'Isam al-Mahayiri, Samir Tarabulsi, 'Adnan Badr, Ahmad al-Khatib, Salah Salah, Majid Muhsin, 'Abdallah al-Shahal, 'Abdallah al-Amin, 'Abd-al-Amir 'Abbas and Col Muhammad Rustum, commander of the deterrent forces in West Beirut.

In his address Qansuh referred to the fact that the Ba'th Party Organization did not object to joining the Political Council of the National Movement. That this has not been realized, is due to the fact that the meeting which was to have been held to announce the new organizational program for the Political Council did not take place.

Qansuh restated his agreement to work in the National Movement under the standard of the chairman of the Progressive Socialist Party, Walid Jumblatt. He urged Mr Jumblatt to define quickly the method of action within the movement.

Qansuh described the Iraqi president as "a spearhead of imperialism aimed against all liberation movements." He said, "We were the allies of Iraq when Iraq proclaimed the Joint National Action Charter between Baghdad

and Damascus. But we have opposed the more recent charter proposed by Iraq, because it does not in the least define a policy with regard to the Arab struggle and the Palestinian question."

Qansuh wondered how the Iraqi president can ask now for Arabistan when he was responsible for giving it up in the past when he was a partner in the government.

He said, "A solution to this problem can only be accomplished through dialogue; it cannot be accomplished by creating problems for the Iranian Revolution."

Qansuh emphasized the importance of establishing an unconditional alliance with the Soviet Union, and his approval of granting the Soviets centers of influence in the area if this would help the confrontation against the Zionist-imperialist conspiracy.

He called upon the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to increase its support to meet the needs of nationalist action on the Lebanese scene against the separatists and Israel which attacks South Lebanon daily. "This does not mean, however, that al-Jamahiriyah is not helping us!"

He added, "Al-Jamahiriyah is concerned just as we are with opposing the conspiracy, especially since it is the only remaining country in the Arab Maghrib region which defends the causes of the Arab world."

Finally, Qansuh praised the position of Dr Usamah Fakhuri and Abu al-Hawl at the conference that was held recently in Baghdad.

The member of the Ba'th Party Command in Iraq, Abu Yusuf spoke about the domestic situation in Iraq and said, "The Iraqi people are enduring dismal terror due to the forced migration and the genocide operations that they have recently been subjected to."

'Abdallah Sa'adah

Dr 'Abdallah Sa'adah then spoke and said, "We value the position of Syria and of its leaders, and we consider that position to be a spearhead of the desired nationalist leadership. We can say with a clear conscience and with progressive self-assurance that anyone who does not help Syria in this position is to be counted as out of action, if not a conspirator against nationalism"

He added, "History has proven that victory must inevitably be on the side of the liberation movements. The most outstanding evidence we have of that is Iran. It used to be a military arsenal which was actually brought down by the power of faith. Imam Khomeyni said, 'The eye [willpower] has overcome the sword'"

Dr Sa'adah said, "We will deter all those who have been misguided by the arrogance of power and wealth. If Iraq wants to create difficulties for Damascus, let Iraq at least permit us to claim our right to exist."

He went on, "Regarding the conflict which has replaced mutual cooperation between Iraq and Syria, let us say that Damascus is assuming the progressive and nationalist position. Anyone who is against Damascus, is against the nationalist position."

He said, "Iraq would not return to its nationalist position, unless it restores the National Pact between it and Syria."

Dr Sa'adah affirmed that he supported the independence of Palestinian action, provided that it continues to pursue the same course against imperialism and Zionism and to serve the Arab struggle against the enemies. "The cause of Palestine is our central cause. We cannot possibly abandon it regardless of the intensity of the conspiracies."

#### Iraqi Ba'thists Oppose Regime

Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 10 May 80 p 3

[Text] A delegation of the Iraqi Socialist Arab Ba'th Party attacked "the Iraqi regime severely and accused it of carrying out tasks, which the forces opposed to the Arab nation had counted on. These include suspending Iraq's pan-Arab role, establishing an alliance with the reactionaries who are tied to imperialism and establishing an alliance which represents a destructive course within Palestinian guerilla activity."

Abu al-Safa, Abu Yusuf and Abu Salah, who are members of the delegation, said in a press conference they held yesterday at the press union, "The only appropriate solution which the nationalist forces have is to complete the structure of the Progressive National Front which seeks the overthrow of the Iraqi regime, to set up a democratic nationalist government and to achieve autonomy for Kurdistan--Iraq."

Abu al-Safa read a press release on behalf of the delegation in which he said, "Not even the men of the cloth have been safe from the indiscriminate arrests and executions in Iraq. In recent months the Iraqi government has executed a large number of them. Among those who were executed was the Islamic philosopher Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and his sister, the writer, Bint al-Huda."

Abu al-Safa added, "Numerous groups of people are now being subjected to forced migration in an inhumane manner. Measures are being taken against families in their entirety after their possessions are confiscated: the younger members of a family are arrested, and then the families are expelled from the Iraqi borders into Iranian territory with no more than 50 Iraqi dinars per family. The number of emigrants [so far] has approached 30,000 persons."

Abu al-Safa accused the Iraqi regime "of working on the Arab scene to impede the establishment of an opposition and resistance front." He said, "The Iraqi regime is continuing its attempts to contain the resolutions of the front which seek to scuttle the Camp David treaty. At the present time the Iraqi regime is heading a group of reactionary countries in an attempt to break up the Arab People's Congress."

Abu al-Safa considered the practices of the Iraqi regime on the international scene to be complementary to the unpatriotic and unnationalistic course [that it has been following]. The position of the Iraqi regime, which is opposed to the Afghan progressive regime and to the Iranian Revolution, is only another indication that the regime is carrying out one of the functions with which it was charged by imperialist circles. These functions will ultimately serve Camp David and the reactionary regimes that rotate in the orbit of the United States which is now linked to the Iraqi regime with pacts and joint security alliances such as the Gulf Security Alliance and the Turkish-Iraqi-Saudi Alliance."

Afterwards, responding to a question about the possibility of establishing an alliance with the communist and Islamic forces, Abu al-Safa said, "Serious attempts are being made to create suitable conditions to establish a patriotic nationalistic front for the purpose of overthrowing the Iraqi regime."

Regarding the nature of the methods that he will adopt in this regard he said, "We adopt numerous forms of struggle, including the armed struggle which has been in use for over 2 years in the North. The armed struggle has now begun to spread and it now includes the center and the south of Iraq."

He announced that "All the groups of the Iraqi National Movement are fully responsible for the explosive actions that are taking place in the center of Iraq and in other places."

He was asked about the disputes that followed the Syrian-Iraqi National Charter, and he replied, "We do not believe that anyone who can exterminate his people in prisons and detention camps can be patriotic. The history of the group that is heading the government in Iraq is a history of disunity. [This is illustrated by] its position on the resistance in 1970, on the Opposition and Resistance Front and on the Arab People's Congress."

He added, "This government is not serious about establishing unity with Syria because there is a clear difference between the Syrian role and the Iraqi role. The Iraqi regime's approval of the Charter was the result of the isolation from which the Iraqi domestic situation is suffering."

Responding to a question about coordination with Arab nationalist groups Abu al-Safa said, "There is coordination with parties to the Palestinian

Resistance and with many Lebanese national groups. The Communist Action Organization and other groups are among those national groups."

#### **Iraqi Mujahidin in Lebanon**

**Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 20 May 80 p 4**

[Text] In a telephone conversation yesterday with the French Press Agency in Beirut, the Iraqi Mujahidin Movement declared that it was responsible for blowing up 2 days ago the office of the Iraqi Transportation Company which is located on Corniche al-Mazra'ah (in Beirut).

The spokesman said that the operation was carried out because the office had been "a nest for espionage and terrorism used by the Iraqi intelligence agencies."

The spokesman also affirmed responsibility of the movement for the assassination of an officer in the general administration of the Iraqi Intelligence Agency on the 15th of May. This was First Lt 'Ali al-Turkumani, who is also known as Ahmad Husayn Ahmad.

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## BRIEFS

ITALIAN SHIP PURCHASES--AL-DIFA' AL-'ARABI has on a past occasion referred to Iraq's interest in strengthening its naval forces and bringing them up to a level commensurate with the dictates of its location at the head of the Arabian Gulf. Information has now been received from Genoa indicating that an important contract has been or is about to be signed between the Iraqi government and the Cantieri Navali Riuniti Corporation. According to this contract Iraq is to acquire a number of Italian military ships. Among those ships there will be four frigates of the Lupo (wolf) class and six frigates of the al-Wadi (Alpino) class. These are just like the ones which Libya acquired. In addition, Iraq will acquire a supply ship of the class Stromboli. What increases the significance of this deal for Italian industry is the fact that the Cantieri Navali Riuniti Corporation won the bid in a fierce competition with other foreign companies. [It was competing] especially against German companies which had submitted a model of their class 122 frigates. It is known that what weighed in the favor of the Italian proposal was the good experience with which the Lupo and the al-Wadi ships have been known. These ships are now in operation in the Italian and the Libyan navies. [Text] [Beirut AL-DIFA' AL-'ARABI in Arabic 8 May 80 p 16] 8592

CSO: 4802

PERES ON PLO, JERUSALEM, RELATIONS WITH ARAB STATES

Bonn DIE WELT in German 5 Jul 80 p 8

[Interview with leader of the opposition Shimon Peres about his political program by Ranan R. Lurie: "I Will Return Land to the Arabs"]

[Text] Shimon Peres (actually his name is Persky) was born in Poland 15 August 1923 as the son of a wheat and lumber merchant. In 1934 he went to Palestine with his parents. In the early 1940's he joined the Labor Party, whose secretary general he has been since mid-1977. Peres has two sons and one daughter.

Sitting in suite 701 of the Hilton Hotel in Tel Aviv, I heard Peres say how he wants to get the situation in the Middle East unstuck and the bogged-down peace talks going again. Leader of the Israeli Labor Party and probably the next prime minister of Israel (according to opinion polls, the Labor Party will get a majority at new elections), Shimon Peres explained to me what his policy will be if and when he becomes Israel's prime minister.

WELT: Permit me to play the devil's advocate and to submit to you a few classical arguments of European and American points of view--not of the PLO or the Arabs. Do you believe that on the basis of its history and of the Bible western Jordan belongs to the Jewish state?

Peres: There is no doubt but that the West Bank historically belongs to Israel, but we are not only concerned here with historical assumptions. We are confronted with demographic facts, and if Israel were to incorporate all of western Jordan in its boundaries, it would have to change and become a dominating nation. While we have the historical right, we also have the historical duty not to spoil our own character. Being a Jewish state does not merely mean undertaking something numerical but also entails a moral obligation. For these reasons I reach a different conclusion: Because I do not want to incorporate 1,200,000 Arabs or Palestinians in Israel against their will, I will place their people and their land again under Arab rule.

WELT: Would you pose conditions concerning the form of Arab rule? Is that in fact possible?

Peres: No, I think we are all under the dictate of the present situation. We have to look around and ask ourselves who the most serious party is with whom we can negotiate about the future of western Jordan. And looking around for any available parties, I see three. Certainly the best would be the leaders of the people living in western Jordan and the Gaza Strip. But they are paralyzed by a twofold fear, [fear of] PLO terror and detachment from Jordan, because without exception they are all Jordanian citizens. None of them is ready to give up his Jordanian passport. They will therefore not make any decision, and in my opinion they know in their hearts that someone else has to decide for them. When I say "someone else," I definitely do not mean the Jewish people.

WELT: Who then is the serious party?

Peres: Evidently Jordan. People like me are prepared to surrender parts of western Jordan to Arab rule again provided that they remain demilitarized. No Israeli in his right mind would tolerate a hostile Arab army a few hundred meters from our parliament, the Knesset. If it is just a case of one state and one army, one can negotiate about demilitarization; in the case of two states and two armies, there is no chance. Again and again one hits one point: if one seeks a solution, one must also seek a solution of the refugee problem. Some 200,000 or 300,000 of them live in Lebanon today. If one has to do with two states, one will find that the bigger state--Jordan--will refuse to absorb the refugees despite being in a position to do so. And the smaller state, the Palestinian one, which perhaps would like to, cannot do so. It does not have enough space.

WELT: But is that not wishful thinking? King Husayn is simply not interested in adding western Jordan to his territory.

Peres: Before President as-Sadat came to Jerusalem, the Egyptians too said that they would not negotiate with us. And I have reason to assume that King Husayn would enter into negotiations.

WELT: Would you be prepared to let King Husayn have the inhabited areas of western Jordan and the Gaza Strip without demanding or expecting a peace treaty with Israel as a quid pro quo?

Peres: I do not want to answer that question unequivocally because I cannot negotiate through newspaper publications. But I can say a little more generally that if we meet with him King Husayn will perhaps reject our proposals and that we will perhaps reject his. Thus we might then perhaps reach an interim agreement, a partial agreement, which outwardly constitutes less than a peace agreement and is less than what he or we have in mind.

WELT: In short, you would be ready to surrender to Husayn parts of western Jordan and/or the Gaza strip without at once establishing normal relations. You in fact hope for the future. You want to take such action but do not want to do so as an immediate first step.

Peres: Exactly. That is how we proceeded with Egypt. And, incidentally, the interim agreement might have another result--not only a territorial one. We might temporarily form a joint government.

WELT: In western Jordan?

Peres: Yes. What I mean is what the British call "shared government."

WELT: If you were King Husayn, would you not be afraid of the number of Palestinians in a then enlarged Jordan?

Peres: No. Let us be honest: the existing systems in the Arab countries are not founded on democratic forms of government. Even today the majority of people in Jordan are non-Jordanians. As long as the army remains loyal to the king, I think he is safe. He carries the army. The army backs him.

WELT: Let us go a step further. Let us assume that contact with Husayn has been established. His Jordanian flag is flying over the big towns in western Jordan, and Yasir Arafat would suddenly find himself in the role of a rebel without a country--for which he would have to fight. What will the PLO do then? Whom will they kill then?

Peres: In that case the PLO would become an Arab problem, not a Jewish one.

WELT: What does your solution for Jerusalem look like?

Peres: We must leave Jerusalem for later considerations. I might reach the conclusion that a united Jerusalem must remain the capital of Israel. I speak only of it being united. As-Sadat once told me that he had no plans for Jerusalem, but a dream.

WELT: Sadat said that?

Peres: Yes. And I think his approach is right: if one is still dreaming, one cannot make too many proposals. Basically, however, Jerusalem must remain the capital of Israel, with free access to all religions. I think that in the domain of symbols we can do quite a bit to satisfy Arab expectations.

WELT: To get back to the PLO: In your opinion, is it proper to compare the PLO to the Nazis, or is it a national liberation movement, whether the Israelis like it or not? Why do we associate it so often with atrocities?

Peres: Well, they have done awful things; no doubt about that. Even for a terrorist movement it is unspeakable indiscriminately to kill innocent

children. There is hardly anything more terrible. But I would neither compare the PLO to the Nazis nor describe it as a national liberation movement.

WELT: Do you believe there is such a thing as a Palestinian nation?

Peres: It is not my business to decide that--any more than it is anyone's business to decide whether there is such a thing as an Israeli nation. I am no chief rabbi who issues certifications of what is "kosher." That is not my affair. If you want to be a nation, go right ahead.

WELT: To call yourself Arabs or Albanians or Palestinians--is that one's right?

Peres: Yes. We do not want to expel anyone, we do not want to confiscate their land, and we do not want to determine their destiny. Whether or not they are Palestinians is an Arab decision, a Palestinian decision.

WELT: When you become prime minister--and it looks like you will then have a government in a position to act--what do you plan to do about the Jewish settlements on the West Bank?

Peres: We will suspend further settlements in densely populated Arab areas because we do not intend to incorporate them in Israel. As regards the existing settlements, I will not touch them, for I do not see anything wrong with Jewish settlements under non-Jewish sovereignty. After all, there are also Arab settlements under non-Arab sovereignty.

WELT: You have nothing against a Jewish settlement under Jordanian rule, for example?

Peres: It might be that way.

WELT: What kind of economic burden does the occupation or Israeli rule on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip constitute for Israel at present?

Peres: The Israeli administration on the West Bank is not an economic problem but a political and a moral one. We do not exclude Arab investments in Israel. I believe that Israel is becoming part of the Middle East. Israel today has little reason to look toward Europe, or toward the United States for that matter; rather [it has reason to look] toward the Middle East. I do not mean to indicate by this that Israel will establish itself as a leading nation of the Middle East or as an economic locomotive which opens up new markets; that is not the question. There are more fundamental things, more serious, more historical ones. Economics is merely a means. One has to decide what aims to pursue.

WELT: Since you are talking about such fantastic cooperation, we ought to return to the starting point of the present political situation. Is there any kind of possibility that any Arab country will cooperate with an Israel

under your leadership and coordinate its actions with you as long as the Palestinian question is not solved?

Peres: I am for a solution of the Palestinian problem. I believe it can be solved--within quite a clear framework. I think it is possible that my or our government will take three steps as soon as it comes to power. We will grant autonomy to the Gaza Strip, thus preserving peace with Egypt. We will change the settlement policy, and we will invite King Husayn to participate in negotiations.

WELT: What kind of autonomy would you give to the Gaza Strip?

Peres: The kind of autonomy which we agreed on at Camp David. But in the Gaza Strip we do not face such obstacles as on the West Bank--Jerusalem, for example. On the other hand, there exists a kind of option in Gaza which does not exist as far as western Jordan is concerned--Egyptian influence. If Egypt and Israel can agree to start with autonomy in Gaza (President as-Sadat has already given his consent, and President Carter as well, as far as I know), there is every prospect of the move toward peace continuing.

WELT: How predominant in your thinking is the principle of Israel as a Jewish state?

Peres: It will be a priority of mine.

WELT: A priority of yours?

Peres: Yes. In the course of history the Jewish people has suffered so much that one can put an end to its suffering only if it has a state of its own. Besides, I believe that the Jews have a historical mission.

WELT: Namely?

Peres: For ethics to rank before esthetics.

The French Encyclopedia once described the Jews as the people that never lets the world go to sleep.

WELT: Is this also a vital factor in your refusal to incorporate inhabited areas on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip in the Israeli state--physically or morally?

Peres: Yes, certainly.

WELT: Who might be Israel's best friends in Europe, for instance?

Peres: I believe that in the future the Arab countries should be our best friends.



WELT: Do you think that the policy being pursued by Begin in western Jordan and in the Gaza Strip at present is harming the moral fibre of the Israeli nation--particularly among the young Israelis?

Peres: I do not have a clear view of what Begin's policy looks like. I wish there were a clear policy.

WELT: In my opinion, one might interpret Begin's policy as his aiming at holding on to Israeli rule over western Jordan and the Gaza Strip.

Peres: Well, I have voiced my opposition against this policy clearly enough--if that is his policy.

WELT: Do you also see a moral problem here?

Peres: Yes. There should be no built-in contradiction between long-term planning, moral attitude and strategy.

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CS0: 4403

SHI'ITES STRONGLY OPPOSED TO PALESTINIAN RESETTLEMENT

Paris LE MONDE in French 31 May 80 p 19

[Article by Lucien George]

[Text] The violent confrontations that had resumed on Thursday, 29 May in the southern suburbs of Beirut between the Palestinians, supported by the progressist Lebanese militia, and the militiamen of Amal, main political-military organization of the Shi'ites, ended that same evening with the enforcement of a cease-fire. The 2 days of confrontation resulted in approximately 25 dead.

"The degradation of the relations between ourselves and the Shi'ites is now our main problem," stated a member of the Executive Committee of the PLO, and he added: "Amal is now playing the same role as the Christian armies did in 1975 and 1976."

Today, Beirut, "resettlement" and Shi'ism are the main words in all political conversations in Beirut, these two notions being furthermore closely linked. Everyone is rejecting the definitive resettlement of the Palestinians in Lebanon, beginning with the interested parties themselves. Everyone knows, also, that the country is not capable of riding itself of the 4-500,000 Palestinians living there now. Their "resettlement" is a cruel fact, but apparently unavoidable.

It is clear, indeed, that the Palestinian resistance is in possession of a plot of land in Lebanon; approximately one third of the land including Beirut-west, while the christian parties control only 10 percent. However, the latter control their territory, whereas the Palestinians share their authority with Syria.

Whatever the situation might be, if one wants to be realistic, one must realize that Mr 'Arafat has no reason to strip himself of all his winning cards, even if he proclaims every day his "indefectible loyalty to the sovereignty of Lebanon." The Palestinian resistance, which was not able to

seize the opportunity of the 1979 truce to "normalize" its situation in Lebanon, is considered more and more by the muslim population and, in particular by the Shi'ites, as an intruding authority.

#### Purchase of Land

As a matter of face, the external signs of "resettlement" can only exasperate the Lebanese. Once again, one can see on the waterfront in Beirut-west Palestinian patrols scanning the horizon and setting off a barrage of artillery as intense as useless whenever a "suspect ship" appears on the horizon. These patrols sometimes check the identity of the Lebanese, even though they had not been doing this since 1976, except on the borders of the camps. The Israeli airplanes flying over the territory are welcomed with D.C.A. firing. The settling of disputes, political or not, often involve Palestinians. Moreover, there are rumors of "massive purchases" of land in the south by the Palestinians, using false names. Indeed, in the land registers, there are only the names of Lebanese buyers, since legally, it cannot be otherwise. However, the public opinion is convinced, maybe wrongly, that the Palestinians "are buying" the south.

The Iranian revolution was a fundamental element in the emergence of the Shi'ite communal conscience, but it was not the only one. The glaring blunders of the Palestinian resistance towards the southern Shi'ites represented also very important determining factors. Paradoxically, the disappearance of the imam Moussa Sadr in August 1978, instead of breaking up the community, consolidated it into refusing the oppression that it had traditionally been under.

The para-military group 'Amal' has served as a catalyst for the Shi'ite discontentment and the fighters of this community have started to desert the national movement parties to join the 'Amal' group. Supported by Iran, quietly encourage by new Lebanese military information services, 'Amal' has become "well-developed" (today it numbers three to four million men in arms) and especially, has received the total support of the Shi'ite population. The organization has profited enormously from the Iranian-Iraqi conflict which brought full support from Tehran against the Beirut pro-Iraqi "baasistes", without taking into account the fact that beyond this dispute, the Shi'ites are especially the adversaries of the Palestinians allied to Tehran.

For the Palestinian resistance, the conflict with the Lebanese Shi'ism involves serious consequences. A new adversary is rising up in front of them, armed and directly motivated by the defense of its own land. It is relying on one country, Iran, at the peak of the battle against Israel and "imperialism".

Furthermore, the Shi'ites are located in the southern part of the country, of which the Palestinians thought they had made a sanctuary, and practically control the two main access routes of Beirut-west towards the south (Chyrah and Ouzai), that the Palestinian resistance consider as strategic routes for itself.

The christian parties, continuing to battle between themselves (once again on Monday, a confrontation Phalanx-Zghotiotes resulted in 6 dead and 15 wounded) are rejoicing. The Shi'ites have become in Beirut-east "respectable citizens" from the moment when, in conflict with the Palestinians, they weaken Lebanese Sunnism. Beirut-west, which was dominated by the Sunnites, is largely today a "half-Shi'ite town". It is, however, not possible to exclude, in the long run, a conflict between the Maronites and their Shi'ite "objective allies".

Is this to say that we are on the brink of the third phase in the Lebanese war? "We are there already" we are told by an influential member of the National Movement, while specifying that one should not expect general hostilities as in the past. He adds: "Israel is in a position to exploit the situation as they wish."

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CSO: 4800

## MAURITANIA

### SPECIAL CRIMINAL COURT OPENS IN NOUAKCHOTT

Nouakchott CHAAB in French 4 Jul 80 pp 1, 8

[Excerpt] Under the chairmanship of Lt Col Amadou Dia, member of the CMSN [Military Committee for National Salvation], legal minister to the chairman of the CMSN and in charge of expediting daily affairs in the absence of the chief of state and of the government, the solemn session of the Special Criminal Court was opened yesterday morning in the palace of justice.

Present at this opening were several members of the CMSN and of the government, in addition to the diplomatic corps accredited to Nouakchott, and other political, juridical, and religious personages.

After listening to some verses from the Koran, the session was opened by Capt Sheykh Sid'Ahmed O. Babamine, member of the CMSN, minister of interior and interim minister of justice and Islamic affairs, who said:

"In opening this formal session, I have the immense satisfaction of presiding over the implementation of a new jurisdiction, the Special Criminal Court, which will bring about, at least that is my hope, the solution to our present problems that are connected with the great increase in delinquency in our country, especially in our capital.

This court was created by edict No 80,095, of 10 May 1980, which establishes the scope of its jurisdiction--crimes against person, robberies, and related offenses--constituted in accordance with Islamic law, with functions and procedures directly inspired by the "Sharia."

Decree No 80,099, of 24 May 1980, designates the magistrates of this court who will participate in the elaboration of future decisions.

Finally, decree No 413, of 30 June 1980, specifies the jury panel from which the chairman of the Supreme Court has chosen, in accordance with decree No 14, of 1 July 1980, those who have been summoned to serve this jurisdiction during the year 1979-1980.

Thus all of the elements of this court are in place and there is nothing to further delay the exercise of its powers, which we all hope will greatly improve the well-being of our society and will provide greater security for all of our citizens.

In the name of the chief of state, I now have the pleasant duty of officially installing in their functions the chairman and the member magistrates and jurors of the Special Criminal Court; I wish them great success and I assure them that the public authorities, as well as those within the jurisdiction of the court system, will look to them."

After his opening speech, the minister of interior and interim minister of justice and Islamic affairs called on Lt Col Amadou Dia, member of the CMSN and legal minister to the chairman of the CMSN, in charge of handling current affairs during the absence of the chief of state and of the government, who spoke as follows:

"I completely share the point of view of the minister of justice and of Islamic affairs and I can assure you, in behalf of the chief of state, who from the very beginning has taken an interest in the creation of the Special Criminal Court, that the importance of this new jurisdiction within our judicial institutions has not escaped anyone's notice. We confidently expect that it will tackle all of the matters within its jurisdiction that presently trouble the order of our society, that it will examine them with objectivity, and that it will make firm decisions, the only things that will make it possible to restore the order that we all value.

The place reserved to the Special Criminal Court must quickly become a preponderant one in our judiciary system. It will render true justice, based on the deeply rooted fundamentals of our religion. In order to be effective, it will have to resolutely apply the principles from which it draws its inspiration, so that these decisions will be examples that will discourage potential delinquents.

We have no doubt that the fear that it will provoke in the minds of citizens who are motivated by bad intentions will be especially beneficial.

8255

CSO: 4400



OPENING OF SPECIAL CRIMINAL COURT HAILED

Nouakchott CHAAB in French 4 Jul 80 pp 1, 8

[Editorial: "Application of the Chariaa: A Return to Our origins"]

[Text] The formal installation of the Special Criminal Court that took place yesterday at the palace of justice in Nouakchott constitutes an auspicious event to be hailed with gratitude.

In fact, this event, so long awaited by our masses, who are deeply attached to the revalorization of Islamic values, is invested with a special character.

First, it confirms a return to our true origins, which will make it possible to preserve and to protect our specifically Mauritanian individuality in the face of the constant aggressions from the by-products of foreign cultures.

In spite of the deep attachment of all of the diverse peoples of our country--united in force and pride--for the teachings of Islam and the Islamic religion, our country has been surprised in recent times to see the appearance and development of all forms of criminality.

The wrongdoing has reached a critical threshold and all diagnoses have been unanimous in saying that there will be no effective remedy as long as the Islamic Sharia is not the one and only recourse for the suppression of crime in our country.

It was in order to respond to this imperative, which had become a necessity for our deeply religious people, that the CMSN and the government decided, this past 10 May, to establish a Special Criminal Court charged with jurisdiction over crimes committed against persons and their property.

This beneficial decision was hailed by all of our people with enthusiasm and relief.

After the installation yesterday of its members, the court became a concrete reality.

The importance of this new jurisdiction is clear because, among other objectives, it will aim to suppress the criminality which has troubled the peace of the citizens and exposed their lives and property to continuing danger.

Criminality is a phenomenon that is foreign to our values and it must be countered with force.

The best weapon at our disposal for the attainment of our objective is the strict and resolute application of the Islamic Sharia as the one and only standard in judging criminals and inflicting the punishment prescribed by the Koran, in order to dissuade those who might be tempted to commit criminal acts.

The Special Criminal Court that has been invested with this authority must make use of all records available to it and deliberate in accordance with the teachings of the Koran in rendering its verdicts.

8255

CSO: 4400

AMIR ISSUES LAW ON USE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

GF301140 Doha Domestic Service in Arabic 1030 GMT 30 Jul 80

[Text] The Amir, Shaykh Khalifah Ibn Hamad Al Thani, issued a decree today regulating the use of telecommunications equipment and frequencies. The law applies to all telecommunications equipment regardless of power with the exception of receivers for audio or video broadcasts. Thus, the law does not apply to radios and television sets.

The law prohibits the possession, use or installation of telecommunications equipment and frequencies for private use, hobbies, experimentation, teaching or scientific tests without a special license from the Ministry of Transport and Communications. The licenses are valid for 1 year and are renewable.

The law also prohibits the operation of any telecommunications equipment or station unless a telecommunications operators certificate has been obtained from the ministry. This certificate is granted after an individual has passed a special examination whose regulations are defined by a ministerial decision.

The law forbids the import, export, manufacture or repair of any telecommunications equipment without a permit from the Ministry of Transport and Communications. Customs officials are forbidden from releasing any telecommunications equipment unless they have received a permit and determined that the equipment matches the specifications stated in the license.

The law compels all persons who are currently selling, manufacturing or repairing telecommunications equipment to notify authorities of all equipment in their possession within 30 days after the law comes into force or such equipment comes into their possession.

CSO: 4802

SUDAN-ETHIOPIA COMMITTEE REACHES AGREEMENTS, MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

Khartoum AL-AYYAM in Arabic 13 May 80 p 3

/Article: "Joint Statement by the Sudan-Ethiopia Ministerial Consultative Committee"/

/Text/ As a model of the commitment of the Presidents of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan and socialist Ethiopia to preserve and develop good neighborly relations between the two fraternal countries;

In appreciation of the efforts which the Organization of African Unity committee, under the chairmanship of Dr Siaka Stevens, president of Sierra Leone, has exerted to mediate between the Sudan and Ethiopia to improve relations between the Sudan and Ethiopia;

Proceeding from the desire we are aiming toward to support and consolidate the historic bonds of relations of fraternity and friendship between their peoples; and out of consciousness on their part of the need to develop relations of cooperation and good neighborliness between their two fraternal countries:

In the period 6-8 May 1980 meetings of the joint ministerial consultative committee were held in Khartoum between the government of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan and the government of the Provisional Military Administrative Council of socialist Ethiopia. This council was formed in 1965 and was reactivated by an agreement which was reached between the two governments as a consequence of the official visit Lt Gen 'Abd-al-Majid Hamid Khalil, the first vice president, minister of defense, and commander general of the armed forces of the people of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan, made to socialist Ethiopia in March 1980.

Heading the Sudanese party was Mr al-Rashid al-Tahir Bakr, vice president and foreign minister; participating in the discussions alongside his excellency were:

Mr Mustafa 'Uthman Hasan, minister of transportation;

Dr Ahmad al-Sayyid Ahmad, minister of communications;

Mr Faruq al-Maqbul, minister of cooperation, trade and supply;

Mr al-Rayyih 'Abd-al-Salam, minister of irrigation and hydroelectric power;

Mr Ahmad Salim Ahmad, minister of state in the Ministry of Cooperation, Trade and Supply;

Mr. Muhammad 'Uthman Abu Saq, minister of state in the Ministry of Culture and Information;

Mr 'Abd-al-Rahman Salman Nasr, governor of the Red Sea Province;

Mr Sulayman Paqiri, governor of Kassala Province;

Lt Gen 'Izz-al-Din 'Ali Malik, chairman of the staff of the armed forces of the people;

Mr Hashim 'Uthman, undersecretary of foreign affairs;

Ambassador Mirghani Sulayman Khalil, ambassador of the Republic of the Sudan to socialist Ethiopia;

Ambassador 'Uthman al-Samhuni, director of the Africa Department of the Foreign Ministry;

Ambassador Muhammad Hamad Matar, manager of the Consulate Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

Mr 'Uthman al-Sayyid, from the Office of the President;

Mr Qasim 'Uthman, undersecretary of irrigation and hydroelectric power;

Mr Muhammad al-Baqir Khalifah, chairman of the Survey Branch of the Engineering Faculty at Khartoum University;

And in addition some senior technicians and experts who are officials in the government.

Heading the Ethiopian party was Comrade Col Dr Gedle-Giorgis Pelleke, minister of foreign affairs of socialist Ethiopia; participating in the discussions on behalf of Ethiopia were:

Comrade Yusuf Ahmad, minister of transport and communications;

Comrade Maj Yilma Girman, minister of information and national guidance;

Comrade Eng Shoa-Aytanfesu Tekeze, minister of mines, energy and water resources;

Comrade Chekol Wollie, minister of foreign trade;

Comrade Col Katsila Maraha, permanent undersecretary of the interior;

Comrade Gen Niquel Marid, chief of staff of the Ethiopian armed forces;

Comrade Tedesse Yilman, ambassador of socialist Ethiopia to the Democratic Republic of the Sudan;

Comrade Maryam Mawqa'i Hayati, of the Ministry of Public and National Security;

Comrade Eng Jiri Kal Masfan, deputy commander of the Northern Command;

Comrade Gen Bisani Tedesse of the Ministry of National Defense;

Comrade Walad Hanna Salnun, of the Ministry of the Interior;

Comrade Isma'il Hasan of the embassy of socialist Ethiopia in Khartoum;

Comrade Gen Tibu Albiu of the embassy of socialist Ethiopia to Khartoum;

Comrade Ezrat Abisi of the Ministry of Transport and Communications;

Comrade Habitu Amari of the Ministry of Transport and Communications;

And in addition some senior technicians, experts and officials of the government.

Comrade Col Dr Gedle-Giorgis Pelleke, the minister of foreign affairs of socialist Ethiopia, and the Ethiopian ministerial delegation accompanying him, met with President Ja'far Numayri.

The two parties discussed a number of subjects of concern and mutual cooperation between the two countries.

The discussions between the two parties occurred in an atmosphere replete with the highest degrees of friendship and mutual understanding, reflecting the relations of fraternity which exist between the two people.

In embodiment of the certain desire to develop fraternal cooperation on behalf of the peoples of the two countries, the joint ministerial consultative committee agreed to put in movement, reactivate and apply in full all bilateral treaties, agreements and protocols. The joint ministerial consultative committee also agreed to reactivate all other existing agencies in order to develop relations between the two countries.

The two parties stressed the consolidation of relations of mutual understanding, good neighborliness and sincere action to strengthen relations



in order to enable the two governments to perform constructive cooperation on behalf of their peoples. In order to attain this goal, the two parties agreed to adhere to respect for the principles of sovereignty, regional unity, national unity and nonintervention in the affairs of either, which are in accordance with the principles and goals of the United Nations Charter and the Charter of the Organization of African Unity and the principles of the nonaligned movement.

The two parties observed with satisfaction the spirit of friendship and affection which prevailed during the proceedings of the branch bilateral committees and praised the efforts which technicians on both sides, through their meetings, had exerted to arrive at the desired results and bring about the two peoples' aspirations for prosperity and progress. The two governments agreed to follow up on implementation of the recommendations as reflected in the reports of the branch committees concerned and the minutes of the proceedings which were agreed upon.

The joint ministerial consultative committee embarked on its meetings through the activities of the branch committees, from which it arose, in order to review the matters and subjects listed in the agenda. These are related to borders, transport and communications, trade, refugees, and cultural and consular affairs; in addition, two branch committees are concerned with water resources and defense and security.

As an embodiment of the directive issued by the joint consultative committee the branch committee on common borders met and issued a recommendation calling for the joint Sudanese-Ethiopian committee on borders to meet in Addis Ababa in December 1980. This was formed to follow up on the implementation of the joint communique issued in Khartoum on 27 June 1966.

As regards the activities of the border committees, the joint ministerial consultative committee called on the administrators, local governor and regional governors concerned on both sides of the common Sudanese-Ethiopian borders to cooperate with one another on matters affecting the two countries in accordance with the contents of the Sudanese-Ethiopian communique bearing on formation of the border committees.

The Ethiopian party responded in principle to the Sudanese party's demand that the Jambila Protocol issued in April 1956 be renewed. The details concerning this will be discussed through subsequent consultations between the two governments. In this sphere, the Sudanese party expressed its readiness to offer the necessary facilities regarding the buildings of the Ethiopian consulate in Kassala.

In order to consolidate good neighborly relations, the joint ministerial consultative committee has approved the recommendations of the action group formed to study commercial matters, and agreement has been given to concentrate mutual efforts to develop and improve trade between the two countries.

To bring this objective about, a new commercial agreement was signed alongside a new trade protocol.

Out of awareness of the need to develop cultural relations between the two fraternal countries, the two parties signed a new cultural agreement in addition to signing a work program for cultural cooperation.

The two parties reviewed the issue of refugees and their commitment to the customs of the United Nations and Organization of African Unity charters regarding the subject of refugees was stressed anew. In addition, agreement was made to encourage and facilitate voluntary return of refugees from both countries.

The two parties reviewed issues related to defense and security and agreed to continue mutual consultations in an organized manner.

In the sphere of transport and communications, the two parties agreed to the resumption of traditional relations between the two countries through the use and development of all means and new communications network system organizations. The two parties also agreed to an exchange of experts and expertise between the authorities concerned in both countries.

On the use of Nile water, the two parties agreed to strengthen technical cooperation in the field of water resources between the two countries and to develop further cooperation among all Nile countries.

As concerns media cooperation, the two parties agreed to support mutual exchange and understanding through the transfer and exchange of information and information materials and visits of experts and technicians in order to support the positive climate, mutual understanding and mutual trust necessary to advance constructive cooperation between the two countries. In this regard, recalling the Freetown Agreement, the two parties agreed to make a mutual effort toward comprehensive broad media coverage of news and developments via the media in both countries.

In recollection of the decision the tripartite ministerial consultative committee of the Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya made at a meeting in Khartoum, agreement was reached that the two parties would contact the government of Kenya to determine a date for the folding of this tripartite meeting.

The two parties reviewed the international and regional political and economic situation and reaffirmed their determination that it was necessary to draw up vital means to expand the fields of cooperation and consultation between them.

During his presence in Khartoum, the foreign minister of socialist Ethiopia held constructive talks with Lt Gen 'Abd-al-Majid Hamid Khalil, the first vice president, minister of defense, and commander general of the Sudanese

armed forces of the people, and with Mr al-Rashid al-Tahir Bakr, the vice president and foreign minister, and Maj Gen A/G 'Umar Muhammad al-Tayyib, chairman of the State Security Agency.

The ministers in the Ethiopian party held fruitful talks with their colleague ministers in the Sudanese party on problems and matters related to the interests of the two countries.

Comrade Col Dr Gedle-Giorgis Felleke and the delegation accompanying him, during their stay in Khartoum, visited:

The Kananah Sugar Project.

The al-Jazirah agricultural project.

The Sudanese Textile factory.

The National Museum of the Sudan.

The hall of the National People's Assembly.

Comrade Col Dr Gedle-Giorgis Felleke and the accompanying delegation expressed their deep thanks to the people and government of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan for the warm reception and the generous hospitality which they met during their stay in the Sudan.

Comrade Col Dr Gedle-Giorgis Felleke extended an official invitation to Mr al-Rashid al-Tahir Bakr to visit socialist Ethiopia. The invitation was accepted, and the date of the visit is to be determined in the course of subsequent contacts.

The next meetings of the joint ministerial consultative committee will be held in Addis Ababa at a date to be announced later.

Issued in Khartoum on 8 May 1980.

Signed:

al-Rashid al-Tahir Bakr, vice president and minister of foreign affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan.

Comrade Col Dr Gedle-Giorgis Felleke, minister of foreign affairs of socialist Ethiopia.

11887

CSO: 4802

PROGRESSIVE NATIONAL FRONT, OPPOSITION PARTY ROLES ANALYZED

Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 19-24, 31 May 80

[Article by Michel al-Nimri: "Reactionaries Assume Defensive Position After Regime Alienates Masses; Confusion Between National Opposition and Right; Reactionaries Are Not Moslem Brothers Only, but Rather a Complete Class of Parasites"]

[19 May 80 p 21]

[Text] Between two visits made to Damascus, the first one early last April and the second one early in May, is a period that is not more than a month. However, many things did change during these few four weeks.

People are talking about the news of Aleppo and the other cities of the north with a great deal of interest and secrecy, and the yellow press is exaggerating and blowing up the rumors. Senior officials sitting behind their huge desks in government offices deny with some pretense that there is anything in Aleppo out of the ordinary.

But a prominent government and party official does not deny that Aleppo and some other cities are being subjected to scouring operations by the regular forces for the purpose of "freeing Syrian society from the gangs of murder and conspiracy." The official elaborated in his explanation of the evidence and documents which had been found and which proved "that outside forces had sided with the conspiracies of the murder gangs." The official did not hesitate to identify the names of more than one neighboring country whose participation had been proven. But that statement was naturally not for publication.

As one tours the streets of Damascus, one is overwhelmed by a sense of awe and fear of talking to anyone or fear of not finding anyone to talk to. Everything one reads about the situation in this country before arriving to it would lead one to believe that Syria was experiencing a fearful nightmare, that one would not be able to find out about various and dissimilar points of view and that looking into anything but the official point of view was impermissible.

One takes pains to contact new and old friends, and one recalls all the telephone numbers in one's notes--notes that became worn out over the years. One also takes pains to travel scores of kilometers daily so that he would not ask about everything he wants over the telephone, lest his telephone was being tapped and there was more than one recording device.

One leaves nothing out of a repertory of apologies and justifications when he asks a friend to lead him to this or the other official of the opposition.

But all one's preconceived notions about the terror, the secrecy and the fear soon collapse at once when the gates of the city begin to swing wide open. There stands the office of the leader of a group of opposition forces. This is the group that is called the National Opposition. That office is separated from the office of the Council of Ministers by the public street which is hardly wide enough to allow more than three cars to pass at the same time. One does not know whether the army men or the policemen who are noticeably scattered around the area were there to guard the office of the Council of Ministers or to monitor the opposition leader.

And here he is, a prominent intellectual who does not cease to practice his opposition [to the government] in his own way in his office in one of the ministries. When one reminds him that he is in a government office and that "the walls have ears," he purses his lips and raises his eyebrows in disapproval of one's incomprehensible fears. One feels somewhat ashamed for one's lack of courage.

Behind every iron gate to which one comes, the Syrian capital reveals what one believes are some of its secrets. But if one thinks of probing deeply into its landmarks, the city becomes impervious. One reaches a decisive conclusion: the closer one gets to the city, the farther one finds himself away from it, and the more one learns about the city, the more one finds out that he is ignorant of it. Those who claim to know the city describe it as plain and impervious.

After living in Damascus for a few days one discovers quite by accident that one is moving from the office of a government official to that of one in the opposition. One finds indescribable pleasure as he traverses the road between the two offices which are separated only by the masses strolling in front of window shops, theaters, newspaper and magazine booths, and confectioners and grocery stores.

Traveling between the two offices one also feels that he is about to lose the thread he imagined he was beginning to hold in order to find out about the crisis, its various aspects and its profound reasons. What one hears in one office is invalidated by what one hears in a second office, and the reverse is true.

Until this moment one felt that he was still talking with the same national group. One heard the same political language that he became accustomed to in spite of the fact that one of the persons one talked with was in the government and the other was in the opposition. All that happened was that during the first visit one felt that the government official had assumed a



posture of self-defense and was living in a very tense atmosphere. But in the second visit the picture was completely turned around: the regime had somehow been able to control the situation and to deal a serious blow to the reactionary and rightist forces of the opposition that had taken action to do away with the government.

The leader of the National Opposition shows his cards openly and clearly during the second visit. He assures one of the fact that [members of] the opposition were striving "to restore matters to their normal course. The government had succeeded in arousing the energies of its infrastructure and of restoring cohesion to its various agencies and organizations."

### The Rightist Opposition

Trying to find the rightist and reactionary opposition and its spearhead, the Moslem Brotherhood Society, takes up a considerable amount of time. One's serious efforts, nevertheless, come to a dead end. One then goes back to look for this opposition in people's faces and in the back streets of the city.

The city dazzles one. It dazzles one with the new objects that he has not been accustomed to find in it for years. It dazzles one with its cafes and Parisian-style restaurants in the aristocratic sections which carry one at once [away] from (Sha'am al-Marajah), from al-Hamidiyah and from the horse-drawn carriages [of the old city] to the Damascus of bids, of huge consumer projects and of a bourgeoisie that was able to impose its life-style on some parts of the city. This bourgeoisie thrust itself as a class force in society and was not satisfied with its economic position in public life in the country. It also sought serious participation in the political power in the country, if not the usurpation and the autocratic control of that power.

Officials in the country do not hide the serious fears they have of these class forces that oppose their regime. Candidly and publicly they are saying that "the vestiges of feudalism and of the bourgeoisie had taken action to push the country backwards and to impose their hegemony and their control." When one asks about the circumstances that restored the breath of life to these "class vestiges," the answer comes immediately: an obtrusive bourgeois class had grown on the fringes of the development plans; this class is now constituting an oppressive burden on the life of the country. Vestiges of the old classes have also been able to restore their conditions somewhat.

Officials affirm that they will not hesitate to strike the financial and philosophical bases of these classes that have revealed their ugly countenance. When one asks about the measures that have so far been taken along those lines, one gets responses that are in most cases reserved. However, those who are in the leftist or in the national opposition do not hide their suspicions about the seriousness of such a course.



Not only did the rightist opposition take action through the Moslem Brotherhood Society, but it also assumed the shape of a class opposition that was visible and tangible, both in the demands which it made directly to the government--and those focused on abolishing some economic measures and laws--and in some professional unions that carry an obvious and a prominent weight. The rightist opposition presented a list of political demands that practically signified the overthrow of the regime, even though it did not say so clearly and directly.

### The Interference of the Opposition

Between the opposition that presents itself to the left of the regime and that which stands to the right of the regime there is some confusion and it is sometimes difficult to make a distinction between them. On the whole the opposition proposed some slogans and made some demands that constituted a common denominator on whose basis those in the right could agree and those in the left.

Among the most outstanding of these demands and slogans were [the following]: removing restraints on democratic freedoms; abolishing martial law; and releasing all political prisoners. At the same time some people publicly proposed that the People's Assembly be dissolved and that elections be held on new bases.

It is noteworthy that throughout the period of struggle and of the bloody events that Syria experienced, the leftist opposition did not adopt a public, clear and direct posture vis a vis the rightist opposition in general or the Moslem Brotherhood in particular. The leftist forces that did define a clear position vis a vis this reactionary rightist opposition was very limited. The leftist opposition regards the existing struggle to be one between the vestiges of the old reactionary classes [on the one hand] and the parasitic bourgeoisie and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie [on the other]. Those who did come up with this analysis did not hesitate in adopting a clear policy vis a vis the Moslem Brotherhood.

### The Dialogue

Government circles and circles of the Progressive National Front are careful to make a distinction between the reactionary and rightist opposition and the national or leftist opposition. They initiated a direct dialogue with the second opposition that was based on getting together with all the national groups that "oppose the treacherous Camp David Accords and practically and objectively stand against the imperialist-Zionist alliance with al-Sadat." This course which the government and the Progressive National Front have adopted is consistent with their analysis which views the current crisis in Syria as one that broke out in response to the "national course of the government which opposes the treachery of al-Sadat." But this dialogue was not very fruitful even though it has not stopped or been altogether suspended.

## Different Headlines

At any rate the crisis continues to have different headlines. Opinions and interpretations of these headlines differ.

AL-SAFIR interviewed most of the political forces in the government and in the national and progressive fronts. It interviewed the opposition forces that present themselves as being left of the regime, and it conducted a series of press interviews in an attempt to convey an accurate picture of the crisis which Syria has experienced. The interviews attempted to deal with all the questions that contributed to the crisis and the results of the crisis. These interviews tried to reorganize the forms of handling this crisis.

We had two choices in finding a way of handling these interviews: we could either publish them on the basis of the independence of each interview, that is, publish each interview separately in an integrated manner; or we could handle them on the basis of the unity of subject matter. We thought that the second method would help the reader formulate a better picture of the subjects that were being raised. It would also enable him to make more precise judgments on the different views that were being expressed on these questions.

The interviews included most of the forces that we were able to contact who agreed to respond to our questions. Our returns were as follows: the Minister of Information and member of the Regional Command of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party Ahmad Iskandar Ahmad; the secretary general of the Syrian Communist Party and member of the Central Command of the Progressive National Front Khalid Bikdash; the secretary general of the Socialist Unification Party and member of the Front Command, Fayiz Isma'il; the secretary general of the Arab Socialist Union, the Minister of State for Council of Ministers Affairs Anwar Hamadah; the secretary general of the Arab Socialist Union, the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Yusuf Ju'aydani; circles in the Democratic National Coalition of the opposition which is headed by Dr Jamal al-'Atasi and includes a group of opposition political forces; the former member of the Political Bureau of the Syrian Communist Party Murad Yusuf who expresses a point of view that is prominent among Syrian communists; and circles in the Communist Action League. We were also intent on conveying the point of view of the vanguard of the Popular Liberation Army Organization--the al-Sa'qah forces. The views of that organization were expressed by its secretary general 'Isam al-Qadi on two specific questions: their understanding of the crisis and their evaluation of the positions of the Palestinian Revolution on the crisis. As we open the file on the Syrian crisis, we do so because of the important and distinctive position that Syria has on the Arab political map and because of the influence that the Syrian position has on the total national question of the Arab nation.

Tomorrow, the Progressive National Front and the Crisis.

[20 May 80 p 13]

[Text] The picture of political life in Syria--perhaps unlike what it would appear to a distant observer--is a multi-colored one, albeit this multiplicity [of colors] does not exclude incongruity.

There is a government, and there is an opposition.

Government is in the hands of a progressive national front that is headed by the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party which, according to the constitution, is "the leader in the state and in society." Power is shared by the Syrian Communist Party, which is not the only communist force in Syria although it is the better known because it is the mother party. There are two parties which are called, the Arab Socialist Union and the Unionist Socialists Party.

The Progressive National Front is trying to broaden its boundaries by inviting other forces to join it in government. Discussions and communications in this regard are underway, but the first signs indicate that the front may succeed in effecting a limited expansion of the boundaries and an analogous expansion of "regional life"--if one may use that expression--by means of a settlement that would ensure strong support from these forces for the course of the front. These forces, however, will remain outside the government for personal reasons that pertain to noncompliance with some of the demands and conditions.

There is the opposition: this is a vast array of gatherings and parties which altogether encompass all the colors and shades [of the political spectrum], from communist forces to radical and liberal forces and the right.

It was self-evident for the file to begin with a question about the reasons behind the crisis that Syria is experiencing.

Some people think that what happened constitutes a form of sectarian struggle; others say that it was a social struggle between the classes which represent the political power and those classes that are being hurt by its course. Then there are those who reduce the crisis to a form of conspiracy and limited destruction.

It is also self-evident that that question be addressed first to the rulers, the parties to the Progressive National Front.

The Socialist Arab Ba'th Party

Foreign Conspiracy and the Class of Parasitic Beneficiaries

The member of the Regional Command of the Ba'th Party and the Minister of Information Ahmad Iskandar Ahmad says, "What happened in Syria is very closely tied with the Syrian political posture vis a vis the questions that

are being discussed in the area. It is known that the Syrian Arab Republic has assumed a firm position vis a vis the U.S. imperialist plans in the area. As a result of this posture it is now being requested, from the point of view of those who drew up this plan--and let us agree to call it the plan of the parties to Camp David--that either one of two matters be achieved:

"Syria's political posture can either be changed, or Syria [itself] can be distracted from pursuing a leadership role in the Arab homeland. Syria is opposing this plot.

"In other words, from the point of view of the parties to Camp David, what is being asked for is [an effort] to paralyze Syria's active role in this area; to cut down this role to size; to bring an end to this role if this is possible; and, if not possible, to reduce its effects as much as possible.

"The parties to Camp David had been hoping in all their plans that Syria would lose its ability to influence the Arab decision and that the Syrian decision would be confined to Syria's regional borders and not go beyond them.

"In the context of this view all the numerous foreign pressures--and this includes the Israeli military concentrations on the Syrian Front--failed to alter Syria's political posture. In fact, Syria became even more convinced of its principles, of the soundness of its position and of the importance of that position with regard to the Arab future as a whole.

"It is for all this that efforts were made to keep Syria busy with itself and to distract it by using the class forces that were affected by the economic and social changes that had been introduced by the March 1963 Revolution in Syria. So far the vestiges of these feudalistic, capitalist and large commercial bourgeois classes have found, or they imagined, or they were led to believe that circumstances were appropriate for them to make their move.

"Because of this there was a battle of the classes in which all the readily available means and forces of U.S. imperialism in the area and all those in the reserves were utilized.

[Question] Doesn't the parasitic bourgeoisie which was formed under the present government have a role in this process, especially since it feels that it is concerned with the problem of political power?

[Answer] As we consider the nature of the events which Syria has experienced and the nature of the revolutionary reactions that confronted these events, we must make reference to a real problem.

In connection with the rapid and comprehensive development plan that took place, and especially between the years 1974 and 1979, a class [of people] that benefited from the construction activity gained ground. This class of



people made fortunes quickly, and it became evident through the crisis that the interests of this class had become joined with the interests of the remaining feudalists, the capitalists and the influential, commercial bourgeoisie. This class [of people] was, therefore, not far away from what happened.

[Question] How will you deal with the situation of this class then?

[Answer] We looked into this phenomenon in depth during the Seventh Regional Conference of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party, and we also considered it in the Regional Command. There was a clear and a specific diagnosis of the magnitude and the capabilities of this class. Accordingly, plans were made to rid the development plan of its flaws and to rid society, as it seeks a comprehensive socialist change, of all individuals, elements or groups that because of their interests have become enemies to the process of socialist change.

The Communist Party

The National Struggle Is Inseparable from the Class Struggle

The Syrian Communist Party's analysis of the reasons for the crisis does not differ from that of the Ba'th Party although the language that is used is different. The language differences lead to a determination of the dimensions and the contacts of the crisis and, consequently, to the principal indicator of the method of confronting it.

Khalid Bikdash, the secretary general of the Syrian Communist Party and member of the Central Command of the Progressive National Front said, "The evaluation that our Syrian Communist Party made and is still making of events that occurred and are occurring in Syria, regarding the real and profound purport [of these events] is that they constitute a national and a class struggle especially over the general directions Syria is taking in foreign policy and also over the provinces of the domestic directions. One of the glorious deeds of our party is the fact that from the outset it rejected totally every allegation that the existing struggle was denominational or sectarian in nature.

"Let us consider the sequence of events: When did murder, one-man assassinations and sabotage activities begin to escalate? This began after al-Sadat's visit to Jerusalem and especially and specifically after the Camp David Accords.

"It is a mistake to minimize the effect of Camp David on what is happening throughout our area and in Syria in particular.

"Camp David is not a game or an inconsequential U.S. maneuver.

"It is known that the United States was forced to move towards a policy of international detente, which the Soviet Union had worked for and is working for, because of a change in the balance of power in the world in favor of

international socialism and national liberation movements. This is evident. But the blows that were dealt by nations to the sites of U.S. imperialism under the umbrella of a detente policy from Vietnam to Iran, Nicaragua, Afghanistan and others, have forced the United States to turn away from the policy of international detente to a policy of confrontation and of dragging the world into a cold war. This is because the United States is hoping that in this way it can maintain its colonialist positions which are being threatened; it can regain what it had lost; and it can extend its control over the world.

"Camp David is a significant link in this U.S. strategy whose principal objective is a U.S. effort [to establish] full control over our area with the cooperation of Israel and international Zionism and with the assistance of the regime of al-Sadat, the old client."

Bikdash raised a question about the Arab party that played a principal role in containing the Camp David [talks] and preventing those talks from spreading. He replies, "That role was basically played by Syria."

Bikdash made the following conclusion: "Since it is not easy under the present international situation to intervene militarily [and] directly to bring Syria to its knees, the parties to Camp David and the Arab reactionaries who sympathize with them proceeded to supply the reactionary forces in the country and to prod them. Chief among those forces was the Moslem Brotherhood Society.

"The Moslem Brothers tried to represent the existing struggle as denominational or sectarian. To justify their criminal, destructive activities, they also began to take advantage of weak points in the domestic situation which had been brought about by the course that had been pursued in recent years.

"The meetings and the resolutions of the Central Command of the Progressive National Front affirmed that Syria would continue its patriotic course against Camp David. The Regional Command adopted constructive resolutions to deal with the domestic situation. This was followed by the Seventh Regional Conference of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party where the same spirit and the same trends prevailed. Reactionary forces were terrified at the possibility and the prospects of putting the adopted resolutions into practice. They escalated their activities which, in addition to assassinations, assumed the forms of disturbances and strikes by merchants here and there.

"These activities reached their peak last March, and it became evident that these activities were being carried out according to a carefully woven and designed plan that was devised with coordination between hostile and reactionary forces abroad and in the country. Its purpose was to overthrow the existing regime, to drag Syria somehow into the Camp David line and to push it back socially.



"In a word, the full merger of the national struggle with the class struggle became evident. It became evident that the battle in Syria was not a denominational battle or a sectarian battle, but rather a sharp and a vicious national and class struggle against colonialism and its agents and against a handful of people who took advantage of and exploited various religious denominations and beliefs. Chief among those is the parasitic bourgeoisie class and especially the lackeys who are no more than the extension of imperialism and the principal source of bribery and corruption inside the country.

"One of the most obvious sign of this is the fact that the demands that were made by the perpetrators of the disturbances and the strikes were all clearly class demands. For example, [they called for] abolishing consumer organizations; granting full freedom to export and to import [activities]; permitting the establishment of joint stock capitalist corporations; giving some public sector organizations to individuals (capitalist of course) under the pretext of improving their work and their production; granting full freedom for domestic trade; and abolishing the penalty for those who manipulate the prices of consumer goods, especially food. In other words, the increase in wages and in salaries that has cost the state 1.8 billion dollars must not go into the pockets of the workers and the masses of civil servant but rather into the pockets of merchants, especially big merchants who take advantage of the smaller merchants by various methods and eat up a large portion of their fees."

[Question] There are those who are saying that the rightist and reactionary opposition has succeeded in fighting its way through the errors and the loopholes of the regime to turn broad segments of Syrian society against the progressive national regime.

[Answer] It is true that reactionary and rightist forces did try, as we stated earlier, to take advantage of the loopholes that were brought about by the course that was adopted in recent years, but this does not mean that these forces succeeded in turning broad segments of Syrian society [against the regime] as the question states.

It became quite evident in the meetings of the command of the Progressive National Front after the events of March that the masses of workers and peasants and also the revolutionary intellectuals and soldiers were not drawn into these disturbances and strikes in any city or governorate. They are the ones who constitute the vast majority of our people as is clear or rather self-evident. This fully affirms the class nature of the events. Accordingly, reliance on these masses must be the cornerstone of [the plan] to oppose reactionaries and their plans. It has been decided, as is well known, that armed squadrons will be formed among labor and other groups.

Tomorrow, the remaining parties to the National Front.

[21 May 80 p 17]

[Text] Yesterday AL-SAFIR presented the opinions held by the two major forces in the National and Progressive Front on the origins and reasons for the Syrian crisis.

Today, we publish the opinions of the other three parties that are members of the front.

The Socialist Unification Party and the two organizations of the Arab Socialist Union.

AL-SAFIR also presents the opinion of the group that has rallied around the former member of the Political Bureau of the Syrian Communist Party, Murad Yusuf.

This group has two characteristics:

First, it is not part of the Progressive National Movement since it has recently split from it, and it is also not part of what is called the National Opposition because of differences in positions.

It ranks [somewhere] between the two ranks of the ruling front and of the national opposition.

Second, this group expresses the opinion of a sector that carries weight in the Syrian Communist Movement.

The Socialist Unification Party

Internal Factors That Facilitated the Mission of the Conspirators

The secretary general of the Socialist Unification Party, member of the Central Command of the Progressive National Front, Fayiz Isma'il thinks that what is happening in Syria is the [direct] outcome of its position. But he also thinks that errors which had occurred inside the country did create a negative concept and a negative climate among the citizens. "If the regime had wanted to surrender, none of this would have happened. If the regime had wanted to make compliments or to negotiate, none of this would have materialized. This is because it is natural that such a position be taken into account.

"There is no doubt that Syria today is carrying the banner of the Arab question in the Arab homeland. There is [also] no doubt that President al-Asad has more of the fundamentals of leadership than any other leader that this country has come across. Today, Syria is carrying the banner of leadership and it is confronting with its well-known capabilities the imperialist, Zionist ambitions in the Arab region and not only in Syria. Its brave soldiers are the ones who are lurking on the borders with the enemy. They are not counting on [protecting] Syria [only], but rather the Arab homeland.

"It is no longer a secret that irrefutable concrete evidence has shown the relationship between what is happening in Syria and the outside world."

[Question] What are these domestic factors that made it easier for the conspiring forces to conspire?

[Answer] There is no doubt that there is something wrong in the country and that errors are being made. I cannot say that the situation inside the country is very clean, that the country is free of corruption and that no one is tampering with things. The fact is there is some corruption, but this corruption is not greater than that which exists in any other Arab country.

"In order for us to be objective I can say that these errors which occurred in the country shaped a negative concept and a negative climate which the criminals were able to infiltrate, and they prospered. Some people believed that these criminals were confronting errors, but it became evident that what was happening in the country was not a confrontation of errors and not a new error, but rather a major crime and high treason. This is because what is happening has gone as far as shedding innocent blood, destroying and burning public property and betraying the soldier that had prepared [himself] for the battle of liberation. These postures are scorned by citizens wherever they may be.

The Arab Socialist Union

The Political Languor of the Parties of the Front

The Minister of State for the affairs of the Council of Ministers and the Secretary General of the Arab Socialist Union Anwar Hamadah adds a new dimension to the analysis of the reasons for the crisis. He thinks that the political languor which befell the parties of the Progressive National Front after they brought their secret struggle out into the open has removed them from the mainstream.

"The events which Syria has experienced recently were not the magnitude that was portrayed by foreign newspapers, or even by Arab newspapers. These events were not so great as to disturb the sleep of the progressive forces in the country or affect the course of action of the Progressive National Front.

"The reasons for these events may be attributed to the following factors:

"1. There is the political languor that has plagued the parties of the Progressive National Front, including the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party, which is a leader in society and in the state as the constitution stipulates. These parties moved away from the mainstream after moving into the stage of public struggle.

"2. Daily errors are being made by some government agencies and some individuals who belong to the parties of the government.

"A citizen would affirm here the positive nature of Syria's progressive, patriotic position on the domestic and foreign scenes. But when he sees some of the government's practices, which were declared by the communique of the National Front in September 1979, he finds himself no longer feeling much concern for all the patriotic and progressive positions. [It is this indifference] that has contributed considerably to the dwindling popularity of the parties of the front in the streets.

"3. The parties of the front did not pay much attention to the fact that anyone who would stand against the Camp David alliance between al-Sadat, the Zionists and the imperialists will be subjected to attempts to destroy his security. The reactionary Arab countries which do in fact stand alongside Camp David even though they do not express that support verbally, did not hesitate to take advantage of religion, which is innocent [of such practices], in an attempt to undermine Syria's steadfastness."

Yusuf Ju'aydani

#### Attributing to Internal Factors More Than They Can Bear

The Secretary General of the Arab Socialist Union, Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Yusuf Ju'aydani confines his analysis of the reasons for the crisis to foreign conspiracy.

He said, "What is happening on the Syrian scene today is part of an imperialist, U.S.-Zionist plot. In view of the national liberation policy that Syria has been following; in view of Syria's opposition to al-Sadat's treason and his surrender to the Zionist enemy; in view of the fact that Syria advocated the creation of an Arab Steadfastness and Opposition Front; in view of all this, a defamation campaign against Syria and its policy began after the Camp David Accords.

"This campaign was launched in two areas. In the foreign area it was launched to distort Syria's political position by describing it as anti-peace. In the domestic area it was launched in an effort to burden the national government and to direct part of its efforts inside the country. The plan for the domestic scene was expanding and growing day by day. The more unyielding the Syrian position became in the face of the Israeli plan, the more the attack against the Syrian policy grew.

"As far as the domestic factors that helped this conspiracy are concerned, I would like to say that every regime has its loopholes. There is no regime in existence that does not have positive as well as negative attributes. But correcting these negative attributes and attributing to them more blames than they can bear is a major error. I think that the events which Syria experienced would have happened any way even if the regime had not engaged in any negative practices. Furthermore, these negative practices that people are talking about did not come into existence today. Why then didn't these events erupt until after al-Sadat's treason and Syria's opposition to it?"



## Murad Yusuf's Group

The position taken by the former member of the Political Bureau of the Syrian Communist Party is characterized not only by his increased concentration on domestic factors, which he keeps on the level of supporting factors which had led the masses to adopt a neutral position in a struggle that was started by a foreign conspiracy against the country, but it also indicates what he sees is "fluctuation in foreign policy." Such fluctuation affects Syria's relations with the West with notions such as neutralizing the United States and openness to Western Europe. It also affects Syria's relations with the Soviet Union, which is sometimes treated as a mere supplier of arms.

Murad Yusuf says, "The question that is being raised today deals with the truth about what happened and about the forces that are lurking behind those events. Those forces played a part in the events that took place, and they are playing a part in the events that are still taking place.

"In our judgment the principal factor in the crisis lies in the intensification of the U.S. imperialist attack on the area and especially on Syria and the Palestinian Resistance Movement as well as on all the national, liberation and progressive positions in the Arab countries. This reactionary imperialist action is tied to U.S. policy which wants to establish its control over an area which is strategically important since it is the principal center of oil [in the world]. This action is also tied to Israel's expansionist, aggressive goals; it is tied to the implementation of the Camp David deal and the autonomy project in the occupied territories; and it is tied to the objective of including some of the other Arab countries and regions [in the Camp David talks] for the purpose of ultimately liquidating the Palestinian question which constitutes the essence of what is called the Middle East crisis."

[Question] Is this the only reason?

[Answer] The principal and the primary factor in the crisis lies in the intensification of the imperialist attack on the area. This was also accompanied by an intensification of the reactionary attack. [In talking] about reactionaries here, we are referring to Arab reactionaries and to reactionaries inside Syria.

In talking about reactionaries inside the country, we think that all patriotic and progressive people know that there are reactionary, class and political forces in Syria. Class-wise, there are the vestiges of feudalism [and] the vestiges of the major capitalists who were removed from political and economic power in past years, in the sixties.

It is true that these classes were removed from the positions where they exercised economic and political control, but they did maintain some of their positions in the country in both the economic and the social areas. Naturally, these classes did not give up, but they rather made an effort to keep up their activities and to strengthen themselves, and they conspired in order to return once again to impose their economic and political

control. [They maintained] their hostile activity as the imperialist attack against the area intensified, especially in the period since 1977.

We can say that the events which have recently erupted and reached a peak last March did not come as a surprise. Throughout the last 2 years reactionaries have carried out a series of destructive operations: the economic destruction of public sector organizations in various ways; and recently the murders and assassinations that have been taking place in Syria for the last 3 years. These crimes have affected a significant number of important civilian and non-civilian Syrian personalities. These crimes are still going on now.

The second domestic factor lies in the errors and violations that were committed in past years by significant organizations in the government. These are not consistent with the patriotic and liberation policy which characterizes the Syrian regime.

We must also pause at a third significant factor: the poor living conditions from which the public, and especially workers, civil servants and junior civil servants have been suffering for a long time. These groups have reached a stage where they are now compelled to have two jobs so they can provide [themselves] with the means of living. It is not a coincidence for one to hear a statement that is common here. The statement says that an honest person cannot live on his salary.

In the course of referring to the factors [behind] the public's dissatisfaction, we must also pause in front of the bureaucracy that controls the work of government departments and the shape of their relations with civil servants. This bureaucracy has now been expanded to include the work of labor unions, farmers' unions and professional unions.

We may add to the preceding factors what we described in the documents of our party as the government's policy of fluctuating in the field of politics between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp. One of the aspects of this fluctuation was the talk about the possibility of neutralizing the United States and [establishing] openness towards capitalist Europe and the West. This led to a relative expansion in economic relations with international capitalism. One of its aspects is that a number of economic agreements has been concluded with U.S. and West German firms. These agreements include agreements to search for oil in Syrian territory despite the special significance of oil in the national struggle.

What is being said about the relationship with the United States is also being said about the relationship with the Soviet Union and the socialist countries. But the masses of our people do not think that this cooperation has achieved its real purport, nor do they think that it has reached the required measure of effectiveness which is appropriate to the level of confrontation that is imminent in our country. It is also to be noted that this friendship with the Soviets is not quite reflected in all areas of life. In fact, sometimes friendship with the Soviet Union is proposed with regard



to the fact that the Soviet Union is a supplier of arms only. There is no doubt that the problem of weapons is an important one, but confining the relationship to this area is harmful, and coordination in political positions as well as economic cooperation are extremely important matters.

For all these reasons and factors the masses adopted a negative position when the crisis erupted, and they were in a state of indifference.

Tomorrow, the opinion of the opposition.

[22 May 80 p 13]

[Text] Looking for the opposition in Syria is no easy matter. The opposition does not consist of leftist forces only or of specific rightist forces defined by well-known parties and organizations. If it were possible to list those who are on the political left, it would not be possible to list those who are to the right in politics and in the classes. The reactionary forces are not political organizations as much as they are social forces that have economic and social importance in the country. These forces are now working to become the politically effective or controlling power [in the country].

The Moslem Brothers, as some people affirm, are the tools of the influential bourgeoisie and capitalists [who use them] to weaken the regime and to tear it apart so they can usurp political power. They are not, however, the alternative power that can take over the government.

AL-SAFIR has tried to meet with representative of the Brothers, but the attempts were not fruitful. AL-SAFIR was only able to obtain a set of documents which contained nothing to present the political ideas of the Moslem Brothers. These documents were confined to sectarian instigation and to arousing family and tribal prejudices, and they advocated taking the country back scores of centuries.

On the left side [of the opposition] AL-SAFIR met with all the forces. It avoided only some of the forces that are known for their close relations with one of the Arab countries that is opposing Syria. It is not logical to listen to someone talk about democracy in Syria while he denies it to himself, first, and to other forces in another Arab country.

Here are the returns of the opinions of the parties participating in the Democratic National Coalition which includes the Socialist Union that is led by Dr Jamal al-Atasi; the Communist Party--the Political Bureau; the 23 February Group; the Revolutionary Labor Party; and also the opinion of the Communist Action League.

The Democratic National Coalition: A Crisis of National Division

The Democratic National Coalition blames the regime for all the domestic difficulties that Syria is facing. It attributes the failure in the government's position to the removal of the question of unity, and it

considers the government's talk about furthering the socialist trend and completing the socialist structure to be an escape forward. The coalition says that the government's talk about establishing a coalition government with workers, farmers, intellectuals and soldiers is a goal that is not being disputed, but in order for this goal to be achieved, these forces must have government [in their hands] and subject to their will; this should not be a government by a group above them.

A spokesman for the coalition says, "Something must be said at the outset. We are experiencing a serious and a difficult national crisis in Syria. This is the general impression that is conveyed by the course of events and by the existing struggles. The only means we have for getting out of this crisis is the free will of the masses of our people and the clarity of matters in front of them. The masses can thus be strong enough to rebuild their national solidarity and to maintain their will and their determination. This is what we tried to focus on. It is towards this end that we proclaimed the slogan of democratic change.

"Events have followed each other and are following each other in a tragic sequence. Our people are suffering from considerable tyranny. Fearful matters and measures have taken place, and there is a noticeable major news blackout around us. Only one voice is heard, and everyone has to be silent except for those who echo what is being said by that one voice. What does this blackout mean? We think it is an expression of the conspiracy, the conspiracy of the enemies of the nation, the conspiracy of imperialism and of the settlement conspiracy. It seems that these events are pointing to a certain course that has its significance. It were as though one of the objectives of this imperialist conspiracy was to leave Syria floundering in its private struggles and crises and to remove itself from the ability to be effective and to exert influence. The imperialist game did get Egypt out of the picture in accordance with the measures of the Camp David course, and its official policy dragged al-Sadat's treason to the positions of imperialism. But [the process] of getting Syria [out of the picture] is taking another course.

"Let us repeat that the events are taking place in a serious sequence. They have not yet ceased to be a turning point so that we can make a judgment on their results. [We cannot make a judgment on those results] unless we look at those events through the new procedures which the authorities resorted to to reorganize their methods of control and to attempt to impose their absolute domination, and unless we view those events through the new proposals and slogans that are being proclaimed by the political leadership of the regime.

"There still is a big gap between our understanding of the course or the significance of events, the reality that these events manifest and the changes that we are calling for and the proposals that are being made by the regime and its notions and methods of change.

"From the course of the political and social developments that have occurred under the existing regime; from the total practices that have been accumulated over the years; from the formulas that have been devised for relations between those who govern and those who are governed; and from the effects that were created by these formulas, we have deduced, just as broad sectors of political groups and of the masses of our people have deduced, that there is a national crisis of division [in our country]; that this crisis is getting worse; and that it is threatening a sectarian explosion. To confront this crisis and to confront the practices of the regime, a popular protest movement broke out. This movement grew and expanded, calling for change, for democratic freedoms and for equality among citizens. Despite its chaotic operations and the destructive actions that tarnished this movement, its most prominent aspect was the democratic national aspect. The methods that were followed by this movement in its expression of opposition and protest were democratic. They did not give the indications which the regime tried to deduce."

Circles of the coalition conclude from the foregoing review that "the popular protest movement and the call for democratic change began to grow and to expand. This movement included political parties, social and professional groups, national elements, writers and correspondents. It even extended into sectors of the infrastructure of the regime's party and of the infrastructure of its front. People began to talk and to express themselves in the means that were available to them, and they assembled together. All this created a general climate of tension: matters developed in a number of cities and areas, and there were demonstrations and strikes. The regime responded to this with broad repressive action. The regime did not want to see in these operations anything but reactionary characteristics, and it confronted us with revolutionary slogans. The regime stated that [the disturbances] were no more than a struggle between its progressive [nature] and the reactionaries and it proclaimed anew the banner of the socialist revolution."

The truth is that the vast majority of the masses of our people have an orientation that is Arab, unionist and liberation and aspires to socialism. But is this the answer to the current crisis in which our country is floundering today to confront this tense and broad atmosphere of the democratic national orientation on which the masses of our people have taken almost unanimous action?

We see in this course which the regime has adopted an attempt to overstep the crisis and the demands and requirements of the stage. There is a specific term for this course in the jargon of scientific socialist thought: "escape forward."

The fact is that the slogans and the statements which the regime has been proclaiming disregard all the statements that were conveyed by its corrective movement when the regime brought this movement to power. These slogans comprise a return to previous slogans and statements. Our country

had previously experienced such as escape forward in the mid-sixties and under another regime of a Ba'th government after the 8th of March when there was a national crisis and a crisis in the regime. There was a major national inclination among the people to exert strong and violent pressure in favor of unity, that is, in favor of renewing the unity of Egypt and Syria under the leadership of 'Abd-al-Nasir. To confront this crisis and to confront this explosive and tense atmosphere among the people, the regime adopted a course of escaping forward; that course was also under the banner of progress and socialism.

The broad masses, and in particular the toiling masses and their unionist and progressive leading ranks continued to insist on accomplishing the question of unity as an expression of one of the imperatives of a historic stage, as one of their major opportunities and as an introduction to liberation, to progress and also to socialism. However, these masses and the leading ranks did not stand in the way of the progressive economic steps, but they rather supported those steps just as 'Abd-al-Nasir had. But this escape forward sidestepped the national will of the masses and wasted a historic opportunity; we are still reeling from the effects of losing that opportunity. A considerable portion of the crisis we are experiencing today, or rather all the aspects of that crisis, with regard to the makeup of the government and relations and with regard to our national pan-Arab crises, are the outcome of that [lost opportunity].

Today, as the regime confronts the current crisis, as it confronts this general popular trend which is exerting pressure in favor of democratic change, it is overstepping all this and proclaiming the slogan of a socialist revolution and presenting the glaring problems of the class struggle and the one-class system. Today, we are telling the regime what we told it in the past: "Progress and socialism are our question and our objective. Today, democracy is what we need; it is our introduction to progress, socialism and also to unity. If this regime continues on the road of true socialist and revolutionary change, it will not find us lagging behind or alongside it, but rather in front of it. The obstacles to progress and to socialism are not with us, nor are they with the democratic national forces. The basic obstacles [to our objectives] are rather within and around the regime. If the regime wants socialism, it should then bring down the bureaucratic and parasitic forces of capitalism which grew under its favors, its authority and its rule. Let the regime sever the relations of subordination to the imperialist market and to petro-dollars. Let it transfer the capital accumulated under its administration, which is invested in its entirety in foreign banks and in the construction of hotels and palaces, and place those funds in the service of a socialist plan for development and production.

[The regime] wants a coalition government of workers, farmers, revolutionary intellectuals and soldiers. Let that be; we hope for nothing else. But let that government be theirs; let it be government in their interests and by their will and not that of a group that comes from above and governs in their name. Let the regime eradicate exploitation and corruption; let it



establish equality of opportunity and actually put into practice the principle of "Everyone [is to be rewarded] according to his efforts, and everyone [is to be rewarded] according to what he can endure and bear." And there are many other principles.

Circles of the Coalition conclude by saying: "We are in a national crisis. The regime's response has been to cover up that crisis and not to get out of it. When one tries to presume upon history and to object to it in a manner that is not consistent with its logic and its course and not consistent with the maturity of the forces and the class and revolutionary circumstances which make that history, barbarianism and not socialism will be the outcome. Today, the danger is that barbarianism will become the law of the conflicts in our society. Hatreds are growing; national divisions are becoming deeper; and sectarian prejudices are being nurtured. We are not healthy at all."

#### The Communist Action League: The Struggle of the Bourgeoisie

If some of the forces of the national opposition have seen no other enemy than the government and the ruling party, some of the other opposition forces have placed the government and the rightist opposition on an equal footing. For example, the Communist Action League diagnoses the crisis as a face-to-face confrontation between the principal groups of the bourgeoisie. After it realized profits and increased its economic control over the country's capabilities and over the local market, the old traditional bourgeoisie (the big merchants and their capitalist assistants in the city and in rural areas) are now striving and are making every effort to enable themselves to control the seat of political decisions, that is, the government. They want to do so by removing the other (the bureaucratic) bourgeoisie, which is controlling the state, to a secondary position and by taking over the task of expediting the restoration of a political merger with imperialism, and specifically with the plan to settle the Arab national question that is taking place in the area.

At a time when the government's non-patriotism appears to be a stumbling block in a resolution of the national question that is favorable to the people, the regime cannot continue, because of specific and numerous domestic and foreign problems, to stay in step with the imperialist settlement plan.

It was the ruling bureaucratic bourgeoisie that opened the doors to the traditional bourgeoisie [to enable the latter] to increase its economic and political activity. It negotiated with it time after time, and it made concessions to it on a continuing basis. It was under these circumstances that the Moslem Brothers came into the struggle, relying on the disaccord of the bourgeoisie, on all the evils of the regime, on the negative effects of the regime's policy and especially on the sectarian character of the group that was in power. This provided them with the possibility of agitating in a broad, reactionary, sectarian manner in the popular circles

which hate the government and feel that there is a big gap separating them from the government. It is a gap that cannot possibly be breached. The action by the Moslem Brothers provided the traditional bourgeoisie with an opportunity to increase its activities and to exert pressure on the government. This bourgeoisie also used the Moslem Brothers as a big cane with which to threaten the government in order to extort more [concessions] out of it. In all cases the bourgeoisie stands to gain the most from everything that is taking place.

The league holds the government "primarily and principally responsible for everything that happened." It considers it responsible for the fact that Syria has come to the brink of danger. It thinks that the government has suspended democratic freedoms completely; that it has contributed to the creation of the sectarian problem; that it failed to solve the problem of livelihood for the masses; that it preserved the interests of the bourgeoisie; and that it also failed to solve the national problem.

The league thinks that the national and progressive forces did not participate effectively in the events and that the ongoing struggle is a struggle between two parties over the same class terrain.

Although the league has distinguished itself from the other forces of the national opposition by adopting this posture on the crisis, it has warned on more than one occasion of the danger of the consequences of the positions of the national opposition which sees no enemies for the people but those who are represented by the government. It does not see the enemy that is represented in the Moslem Brotherhood Society and in the sectarian, reactionary and traditional bourgeois actions of the Moslem Brothers.

Tomorrow, the National Front reviews its experiment.

[23 May 80 p 13]

It was natural that the events which Syria experienced would require a re-evaluation of the experiment. This is what the Progressive National Front did last September. This reevaluation resulted in what is now called the September 1979 Communique.

The discussion around the September Communique reveals the dissatisfaction of some parties in the front with the practices of the front. It also reveals the dissatisfaction of some people with what they call a delay in implementing the content of the September Communique.

The Syrian Communist Party thinks that the most important thing which the front needs is to achieve more solidarity between it and the unionist socialist masses. It is this party's opinion that the front can accomplish more than it has accomplished and that it can express optimism with regard to the implementation of the September Communique. Anwar Hamadah, the secretary general of one of the two Arab socialist parties, says that the parties of the front have to be lenient in many things, including the size



of their involvement in government. What is important is to develop the activities of the front. Yusuf Ju 'aydani, the secretary general of the other Arab Socialist Union, thinks that the parties of the front must be allowed to have their own newspapers.

Ahmad Iskandar Ahmad, member of the Regional Command of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party, replies that ever since the new government was formed, the daily effort has been focused on implementing the September Communiqué. [He said] that discussions were underway to broaden the front.

Although it seems that the front is reviewing its experiment, the Communist Party--the Political Bureau--thinks that the front in its present form is basically suitable for [establishing] relations with the national forces but that it is not yet a suitable framework for these relations.

#### The Communist Party: Significant Steps That Must Be Put into Practice

The Secretary General of the Syrian Communist Party Khalid Bikhdash deals with the measures that have been announced for developing the front in the Regional Conference of the Ba'th Party, in the speeches of President al-Asad or in the resolutions of the front itself.

"Thinking about developing and expanding the Progressive National Front antedates the recent events. This was then investigated in the successive meetings of the Central Command of the front in September 1979. A special committee was formed from all the parties of the front to deal with the question and to come up with a formula. What has been completed so far is an expansion of the Central Command of the front by adding to its members the president of the Federation of Labor Unions and the president of the Farmers' Union. This was also done in the branches of the front in the governorates. It was done by a resolution of the Central Command of the front and, as is well known, a law was issued by the president of the National Front in this regard. This is undoubtedly a step that has moral, political and practical importance. It will have a positive effect on the activities of the Central Command and among the masses of workers and farmers themselves.

"Our Syrian Communist party has expressed its opinion that the most important step in developing the front and in increasing the solidarity between it and the popular masses is to extend the activities of the front among the masses themselves in the plants, in the districts, in the villages and in the institutes. Attempts of this kind were made in Damascus, and they were successful. The meetings of the front included broad masses of the public, and they had a concrete political effect. We believe that application of this on the broadest scale is necessary.

## The Unionist Socialists Can Accomplish More Than They Have

The Secretary General of the Unionist Socialist Party Fayiz Iama'll says, "The fact that the front is not effective is a position that we stated in the historic meeting that was held by the leadership of the front in September 1979."

[Question] But the opposition is saying that the parties which are formed within the front with the Ba'th Party are no more than false witnesses for the policy of this party!

[Answer] The September Communique included an evaluation of the previous stage, and it set the features of the image which the front is to adopt in the future. It is through this course that we met with all the forces, the unions and the personalities and we listened to what they wanted to say. We told them our opinion so that this would be a springboard towards a new course.

It was at this stage, when the foreign forces felt the danger if national unity were to be realized and if the front were to adopt the course of development, that the escalation ensued and took its course. This forced the country to become preoccupied with confronting [the situation] by means of the well-known measures. This weakened our tendency to give the front the role whose principal lines we had already drawn up.

But to say that the front has no function would be unfair. The front can do more than it has done, and it can play a bigger role than the role it is playing now. But to say that the front is the primary authority in the country is not accurate. However, the plans that have been drawn up for the front can give it good characteristics. I am expecting the front to play a full role in the future.

I am optimistic about the application of the September Communique because the desire to support and develop the front is pressing. There is nothing to indicate that there is a desire to shelve the front. This subject was discussed seriously in the presence of President al-Asad. The directives affirm that the front will play its role. But I will not anticipate matters: the accomplishments of the future will speak for themselves.

## The Socialist Union: Partners or Participants

The Secretary General of the Arab Socialist Union Anwar Hamadah [who is also] Minister of State for the affairs of the Council of Ministers proceeds from the outset to affirm that "they are partners in government and not participants in it."

He says, "We are still in the beginning of the road. The Ba'th Party has the right to have its own fears; no party would hand over to another party the government which it is leading. But we have always been saying

that fundamental and pan-Arab questions required a certain measure of Sufism as well as [an effort] to put to use what is regional for the benefit of what is pan-Arab. As long as this is our slogan, we have to be lenient in all other matters, including the size of our involvement in government as long as the government is following the course of pan-Arab activity."

Hamadah concludes by affirming the importance and the necessity of putting into practice what was mentioned in the front's communique last September. He calls attention to the importance of developing the front and of developing its actions in the governorates and in the regions, and he affirms that the front is the proper framework for leading the country towards achieving its pan-Arab and its patriotic goals.

#### Yusuf Ju'aydani: Demands To Develop the Front

Minister of Labor Yusuf Ju'aydani proclaims openly "their dissatisfaction with the situation of the front in its current form."

"I cannot say that the front is playing the role that is required of it. It must be more effective in planning domestic and foreign policy. Offices must be provided for the parties of the front so they can have better communications with the masses. They must have newspapers to express their views."

[Question] How can the front be developed so that it would include new forces which are still outside the front or in the ranks of the opposition?

[Answer] The president of the republic has announced that the front was open to all the forces who opposed Camp David. We in the Socialist Union have affirmed more than once the necessity of making room for all the national, pan-Arab and progressive forces in the front."

#### The Ba'th Party: No Delay in Implementation

The subject of the interview went back to the Ba'th Party which was represented by the member of the Regional Command, Minister of Information Ahmad Iskandar Ahmad.

[Question] What has been achieved so far towards developing the front?

[Answer] The Regional Command of the front formed a committee whose function is to prepare a comprehensive study about this matter with which the command of the front alone is charged.

[Question] Other than developing the front, what [items] in the September Communique have been accomplished?

[Answer] We cannot separate the discussion about the communique that was issued by the party command along with the parties of the National Front late last year--this was initiated by the Party Command to study the domestic situation--from the resolutions of the Seventh Regional Conference of the Ba'ath Party. This is because the conference was convened after the communique was issued. The conference was not dealt with in the front's communique.

If we were to take the communique of the front, the communique of the conference and the statement that was made by the government to the People's Assembly, we can say that most of the points made in the aforementioned statements have been covered and implemented and that the others are being implemented, although they are not yet completed.

[Question] Some of the forces that are participating in the front, however, think that [the process of] putting what was stated in the front's communique into practice is proceeding very slowly. To what do you attribute this?

[Answer] I am opposed to generalizations. To say that [the recommendations made in the communique] are being implemented very slowly is inaccurate. The communique of the front stated that it was necessary to improve the standard of living, and the conference approved an increase in salaries and wages. We saw how this was implemented a short period after the conference.

The communique of the front also approved support for the public sector; it approved protection for it as well as extricating it from reasons for suspicion. Ever since the government was formed early this year, we have been seeing that its daily work has been channeled into this framework. It announces many measures for administrative reform to the citizens. [These include] either a reconsideration of the leadership structure of the public and the joint sectors and the reform of some of their laws, or issuing new legislation to cover what was not previously covered.

The communique of the front and also the communique of the regional conference of the party spoke about the necessity of expanding the front. You know that this matter is being discussed now on a broad scale. It is a discussion that began but has not yet been completed because it has to have controls, foundations and rules. Studies in this regard are underway between us and the remaining parties of the front and also between us and the political elements and groups that can be part of the front.

Where then is the delay in implementation that you have referred to? I believe that speaking constantly in generalizations lacks accuracy.

## The Communist Party--the Political Bureau

### A Foundation, Not a Framework

The Communist Party--the Political Bureau--stands outside the ruling front or outside the opposition. Accordingly, it has its own distinctive opinion on most matters. The spokesman for the party, Murad Yusuf responded to a question about whether the party was still suitable as a framework for the national and progressive forces.

[Answer] If we were to think deeply about this, we could say that the existing National Front can now serve as a foundation and not a framework for the national and progressive forces. Naturally, this is not to be brought about through the methods that were followed and the frameworks through which the front has so far been operating.

Basically, we consider the creation of the front to be one of the national gains for all the nationalist forces and for our people. But after all these years have gone by since its establishment, we must pause to study the experiment and to come out with practical concepts for developing it.

I would like to call attention to the importance of having democratic, constructive and positive relations prevail among the parties to the front. I am not saying that each party to the front is to enjoy equal rights, but I am rather saying that each party should have equal opportunities to express itself. The front, therefore, must express the opinion of the masses and should not be called a national (SIC) front. Although we are not saying that the front is closed to the masses, it is semi-closed. The front must be open to all the national and progressive forces in the country, [which may join the front] as parties participating in as a collective body. The front must always initiate dialogue with all these forces. It is in this manner that the front can become the foundation for the accord between all the progressive and national forces.

The slogan of developing the front was naturally proposed several years ago, but so far we have not had a clear sense of this development. The only thing that has happened recently is that the presidents of the labor and the farmers' unions were added to the members of the front. This step does have its positive characteristics, but it is quite a minor step.

Briefly, it may be said that the front has not yet become a leadership force for our people, polarizing the popular masses and the various national forces.

Tomorrow, How Does the Front View the Opposition?



[24 May 80 p 13]

[Text] Among the discrepancies that attract attention in Syria is the fact that the class strata and social foundation of the regime are made up of groups that include most of the classes that have different and contradictory interests. The regime is politically dependent on forces that are disparate in their political and ideological orientation--from progressive pan-Arab trends, to Leninist, Marxist trends, to forces that reflect the interests of the national bourgeoisie with their classical political perceptions. This regime is facing political opposition that is based on social groups which also include most of the classes of Syrian society. These begin with the vestiges of feudalism, capitalism and the parasitic bourgeoisie, and they also include some social groups that belong to the toiling classes. These groups express themselves politically in various forces [that range] from the far right to the far left: from the Moslem Brothers to the extremist Marxist organizations.

Just as the forces that constitute the class strata and political foundation of the regime come together in the context of a progressive national front with a unified political program, some groups of the opposition forces do come together in the context of frameworks that are somewhat unified. They also all agree on the grounds for action to change the existing political power. They also agree on general slogans in which the demands of the right are combined with those of the left.

This [phenomenon of] involvement and intergradation, which actually arouses attention, is explained by some as emanating from a lack of clarity in the class stratum formation in societies that are undergoing a process of growth. It is explained by others as a lack of firmness on the part of the government, through its ruling party, in making its political and ideological choices. A third group explains [this phenomenon] by affirming that the political positions of some parties and groups are not decisively formed on the principles of class strata, but rather on other various and disparate elements and stated factors that are controlled by sectarian, tribal and other stated factors and elements of backward societies.

This is an attempt to find out about the forces of the opposition through the forces that are participating in the Progressive National Front. It is also an attempt to find out about the forces of the front itself through the forces of the opposition and also through what each group says about itself.

The Ba'th Party: The Link with Camp David Has Been Proven

We began the interview about the forces of the opposition with the Syrian Minister of Information, a member of the Regional Command of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party, Ahmad Iskandar Ahmad.

[Question] How do the government and the ruling party view the opposition and how do they deal with it?

[Answer] We do make a distinction between those who complain about the negative features which accompanied the development plan or the negative features that exist here and there in the institutions of government or the public sector and those who are not interested in reforming these negative features as much as they are interested in taking advantage of the fact that they exist for the purpose of proposing political ideas whose outcome coincides with the plan that seeks to weaken Syria and to change its political position.

As far as the first matter is concerned, we were the first to call attention to the presence of these gaps, and we were the first to call attention to the necessity of studying them. We consider those who want to close the gaps and to repair the negative features to be part of the revolutionary forces in society that are concerned about the power of the regime and the continuity of its ideological, pan-Arab and socialist position. We are with those people in the same trench.

But those who wanted to proclaim slogans that would take advantage of these negative factors so as to discourage the citizen, to say that the roads were closed and to slander Syria's ideological position were proven by events to have been taking action according to a plan that was directly tied to all the foreign pressures that have been targeting the defiance and the struggle of Syria.

We wanted our actual practices to make a clear distinction between the two groups. We are with the first team; we stand united with it against the opposing forces of retrogression to which the parties of the second team belong.

[Question] Is there something that actually proves that there is a tie between the local reactionary opposition and Arab reactionaries and the Camp David alliance?

[Answer] The facts of the matter and the course of events, in addition to our security investigations, have proven the existence of a close tie between these parties. While the gang of the Moslem Brothers specialized in assassinations, the other team maintained its silence about these operations and justified them.

[Question] It is known that there are forces in Syria that oppose the government but that they are at the same time opposed to the Camp David alliance.

[Answer] The Seventh Regional Conference of the party adopted a resolution to expand the front. As a result a dialogue was established with a number of elements and political groups for the purpose of enabling them

to play the role which is required by good citizenship, by faith in Syria's ideological pan-Arab course and by the necessity for a socialist change in the country.

This dialogue was initiated by us; it was the result of a previous concept; and [its purpose was] to implement the resolutions of the regional conference. We are not making any conditions, just as the secretary general of the party, [our] friend Hafiz al-Asad has announced in one of his famous public speeches. We are making no conditions to the elements or to the groups that want to join the front and perform their duty to the homeland and the nation. The only condition we make is counteracting Camp David and its consequences and counteracting the dangers to the Arab nation that may result from these accords.

[Question] Has this dialogue produced results?

[Answer] The dialogue has not been completed, and anticipating matters serves no useful purpose.

### The Communist Party

#### Indirect Cooperation with Moslem Brothers and Reactionaries

The Syrian Communist Party has reservations about expressing its opinion of the forces of the opposition, but it also has reservations about the positions of these forces which proclaim their condemnation of the Camp David Alliance and yet oppose the opposition's posture on the regime.

Khalid Bikdash says, "It is of course good and important to condemn Camp David and al-Sadat's treason, but this is not enough. What is especially essential now is that we recognize the key leadership role which the people, the army and the regime of Syria are playing against the Camp David conspiracy, against al-Sadat's treason and against all the colonialist plots of the United States, of Zionism and of the reactionaries in the area.

Recognition of this must be the principal point of departure for every citizen in drawing up his policy and in determining his position.

The principal point of departure for us, the communists, in determining our position on every situation, every regime and every group is the position of that regime or that group on colonialism and its plots. It is in this context that we are fighting at the same time for the other vital questions such as the demands of the popular masses, democracy and respect for the dignity of citizens. [We are fighting] against high prices and for a continuing balance between wages and prices. [We are fighting] to ensure rewarding prices for farmers' products, to reduce the ceiling on land ownership, to limit the ceiling on investments and especially to do away completely with the role of the bourgeoisie.

How can we reconcile the condemnation of Camp David with even indirect cooperation with the Moslem Brothers and with the reactionaries? [How can we reconcile condemnation of Camp David with] saying nothing about the crimes of the Moslem Brothers and about the murder and sabotage activities that they carry out? How can this be called a popular upheaval although nationally and socially it is a reactionary retrogression?

One of the most dangerous matters for those and to those who call themselves the "leftist" opposition (note the quotation marks) is for their positions to coincide with those of the dismal reactionaries. There is no doubt that colonialism stands behind the positions of dismal reactionaries.

The Socialist Union (Hamadah): Impossible Demands

The Arab Socialist Union has its point of view on the Moslem Brothers. It too thinks that small communist organizations practiced violence also.

The Minister of State for the affairs of the Council of Ministers, Secretary General of the Socialist Union Anwar Hamadah says, "First of all there is the Moslem Brotherhood Society. Although it is a small society, as far as I know, [its members] do not represent one trend, but rather three. One trend does not believe in and does not practice assassinations and physical liquidations; a second trend does practice assassinations and liquidations; and [a third] trend advocates civil disobedience and disturbances. At any rate I do believe that the role of the Brothers in the events is not of the magnitude that some would imagine. They have a very limited role. I believe that foreign forces were behind the major actions. There is the Phalangist Party; there is international intelligence; and there are professional mercenaries.

[Question] Is there material, concrete evidence to prove this?

[Answer] Yes, yes there is evidence. I know that European nationals were arrested in Syria during and before the investigation. They were not Moslems.

[Question] What about the Phalangist Party? Is there evidence to prove its complicity in supporting the rightist opposition?

[Answer] According to my information the Brothers were being armed through Lebanon and specifically by the Phalangist Party. This became quite evident in Aleppo. Furthermore, the Phalangist Party tried to deceive and to arm some Christian citizens in Syria.

There are also traces of the defeated who were discharged from the party as a result of their negative positions. I am referring to those who were called Salah Jadid's group. I believe that those people cooperated in this matter.

The events of Aleppo have also revealed the existence of some small extremist communist organizations that took part in the violent incidents.

[Question] One may understand from what you are saying that the forces of the opposition are divided into two trends: a reactionary opposition that stands to the right of the regime and an extremist, leftist opposition that presents itself to the left of the regime.

[Answer] Yes, the National Front did propose that subject, and the agreement was clear that the front was open to all the forces that were opposed to Camp David.

[Question] If we were to regard hostility to Camp David to be the basis for the agreement of all the nationalist forces in the context of the front, what then is it that prevented all the forces that oppose Camp David from joining the front?

[Answer] It is my belief that these forces which call themselves leftist, even though they are small in size, have made two errors that led them into these positions.

The first error was the concern for preserving the essence of the group.

Naturally, anyone who proposes a change in the front and a change in government is not proposing a subject for discussion. They do not want dialogue since they are making impossible demands.

The second error was the emphasis [placed on] domestic questions and not on the national question in making an evaluation of the government and of the front.

**The Unionist Socialists: No Left Outside the Battle**

The Secretary General of the Unionist Socialist Party Fayiz Isma'il does not stray far from the previous points of view in evaluating forces of the opposition even though he appears in his replies to be reluctant to speak at length about the forces of the opposition, remaining content with the position in the general context.

"We are seeing many errors [committed] in the country, but we do not find in these errors any justification for adopting a certain position. We know that democratic freedoms have not taken their natural course in our country and that some repressive measures are being taken. This, however, does not lead us to ignore the fact that these measures were simultaneous with the assassinations and the foreign interventions. To oppose all these positions we can only resort to repression and strength.



With regard to the leftist opposition, this opposition has to know that this country is in a permanent battle against both Zionism and imperialism. Under such circumstances all the capabilities must converge to oppose the enemy. There can be no left other than that which comes about through opposition to imperialism. But those who talk about the left from afar without assuming the responsibility for opposing the conspiracy are not leftists, but rather rightists. In brief, there is no left outside the battle."

#### The Socialist Union (Ju'aydani): the Process of Self-Criticism

The minister of labor, the secretary general of the Socialist Union (the second trend) thinks that the right and the left in the opposition meet on the same grounds.

He says, "Those who present themselves as left of the regime and those who present themselves as right of the regime come to the same results. The extremist, the unaware and the immoderate left which does not take objective circumstances and the current situation into consideration, cannot but ultimately converge with the right.

"We are not saying that the Syrian regime is untouched by negative factors or that it is free of loopholes. Like all the regimes [in the world] it has its negative features. But I do not believe that there is a single regime in the world that has engaged in self-criticism as much as the Syrian regime did.

It is from this perspective that we do not find a [single] reason for the positions of some of the forces that place themselves in the ranks of the opposition."

#### The File of the Syrian Crisis: Next Week

##### Murad Yusuf and Not the Political Bureau

There was an inadvertent error in yesterday's installment of the "File on the Syrian Crisis." The opinion that was attributed to the Communist Party--the Political Bureau--was that of Murad Yusuf, the member of the Political Bureau which is affiliated with the Communist Party.

There was also an error in the beginning of the sixth line of the fourth paragraph of Murad Yusuf's opinion. The term, "national front," should be corrected to read "superior front [Jabhah Fawqiyah]." Mention of that matter and an apology are due.

[31 May 80 p 12]

[Text] Domestic Conditions in Syria: Conclusion of the File

Syria has recently experienced events that are extremely serious and significant. Rightly or wrongly the media have agreed to refer to these events as the Syrian crisis.

Syria is not merely a country or a regime among all the existing Arab countries and regimes. It is the safety valve in the national Arab problem, especially after the treason of the regime of Egypt. The National Front in Syria, the Palestinian Resistance, the parties to the Opposition and Resistance Front and numerous Arab national and progressive forces think that what happened in Syria is the result of its foreign policy and of the positions it assumed on the national and the pan-Arab scenes.

But there are those who think that there is a strong relationship between what happened and the domestic conditions in their entirety. AL-SAFIR met with most of the effective political forces in Syria, and it conveyed to the reader the points of view of the various forces about the reasons for the Syrian events. These are points of view that are not free of sharp contradictions between those who are in power and those who are in the opposition.

AL-SAFIR concludes this file with this investigation in which parties to the National Front respond to a long list of questions and queries, most of which we picked up from the spheres of the opposition so we could address them to those in power.

Because Syria's foreign policy is clear and well known, our questions focused on domestic issues. Chief among those issues was that which pertained to political democracy.

The interview began with a member of the Regional Command of the Ba'th Party, Minister of Information Ahmad Iskandar Ahmad. We had the following interview with him:

Democracy and the Emergency Law

The Ba'th Party: Freedom for Those Who Believe in Socialism

[Question] Some forces are calling for the repeal of the state of emergency or for imposing no restraints on democratic freedoms. Do you think that such demands are realistic and that an investigation into them is possible?

"Article" abolishing the system of the union of government bodies in one act of unified government, the abolition of the state of war with Israel. This law was passed in 1961 and it was also in the state of war with the United States that kidnapped Palestinians and is still occupying it, along with some individuals / some other Arab desert law. Various amendments were made to the constitution and during the years of Nasser and the various revolutions throughout the years (1952 - 1958) it was abolished. This law was also abolished under the leadership of the Arab Party since 1961. Policies that could have been used for repressive practices were repealed, weakened or restricted. The last of these matters was what we did 2 months ago. The military government or his deputy do not have the authority to take over the army and the security forces and the police unless it expressly affects the state. We repealed the article in the law that allowed the deputy military governor to take over cases in a state of martial that did not affect the security of the state.

As for regard to democracy: freedom we in Syria can be proud (to say) that ever since the corrective movement we have been living in a democratic climate that was hardly available in Syria at any period of time. It is not presumptuous of me to say that such a climate as that under which we are living is not available in other Arab countries.

We understand that democracy is democracy for the people and that it gives full freedom and responsibility to the popular organizations of the people, to the constitutional establishments and to the local councils that are directly elected by the people.

We understand that freedom is that (quality) which enables all those who believe in the socialist progressive course, all those who believe in the future and the unity of the Arab nation and in the necessity of its victory over the Zionist enemy--those groups that practice their freedom in accordance with what the law stipulates and in accordance with what the constitution unconditionally stipulates--to practice their freedom with full responsibility.

Some of those slogans that were proclaimed by groups, or, to be more specific, by reactionary elements, were able to find their way to some of the leaders of the professional unions who proclaimed those slogans so as to make them serve as a political cover to justify the murders and the criminal activities inside Syria as well as to give the impression abroad that there was a crisis of freedom in Syria.

Had there been a crisis of freedom in Syria, they would not have been able to issue their statements, nor would they have been able to meet or to talk.

Had there been a crisis of freedom in Syria, some of them would have been able to make these demands (in the first place).

The constitution guarantees every citizen the right to his opinion.

The constitution guaranteed the citizen the right to work. But the constitution also required the government to protect the national fabric of society, and it required the government to implement the law and its sovereignty.

#### The Freedom of the Press

[Question] The parties of the National Front still lack their own independent newspapers. Is there an intention to permit these parties to publish their own newspapers?

[Answer] Every one of the parties to the front has its publications, its bulletins and its periodical and non-periodical newspapers. These bulletins and publications are printed and distributed with our knowledge and in most cases with our assistance.

As far as newspapers are concerned--that is, daily, weekly or monthly newspapers--consideration is currently being given to whether or not it would be better for the parties of the front to have one newspaper that would be the spokesman for all or whether each party is to have its private newspaper. There are different opinions among the parties of the front themselves about the formulation of this independent press. But we in the command of the Ba'ath Party, since we are the leading party in society and in the state, as the constitution stipulates, have adopted a resolution that the front must have its newspapers. We are awaiting what the parties will decide: will each party have a newspaper, or will there be one unified newspaper for all the parties of the front?

#### Political Detainees

[Question] Some of the western media and some international organizations are talking about the fact that there is a large number of political detainees. How true are these allegations, and can we have an approximate figure of the number of political detainees and the movements which they represent?

[Answer] There are no political detainees as such in Syria. If one makes an exception of the few people who did belong to the leadership prior in 1970, there would be no political detainees.

After the party's regional conference some of the groups that were affiliated with those who had broken with the Syrian Communist Party or with the Communist Action League were released. They were all released, and there are no political detainees in Syrian jails. Those people which the western press is referring to and is describing as politicians are murderers, and murderers are not politicians.

[Question] The existence of some unions in the opposition does reflect a form of political democracy. What are the factors that compelled you to dissolve these unions?

[Answer] I want to call attention to one fact. We did not dissolve the professional unions. We dissolved the leadership councils of some of these unions. We did not take this action until after the infrastructure of these unions protested strongly against the political positions [of the leaders] which were not consistent with the laws of these unions or with the convictions of those who are members of these unions.

There was universal action in all the governments of Syria against the elements. Specifically, [those] elements that were able to infiltrate the leadership of these unions. They were able to infiltrate in the context of a climate of freedom and democracy that we believed in and that we still believe in.

There are numerous texts in the laws of these unions which compel them to work for the state and for society and to preserve the cohesion of society and the sovereignty of the law. Some of these unions, such as the Engineers' Union, for example, have functions that have nothing to do whatsoever with politics except with regard to the efforts of the Engineers' Union to protect and support the public sector experiment and to make that experiment successful. What happened was that [the leaders of the unions] violated the laws according to which these unions were formed: they abused the honor of the profession and they betrayed their trust. They wanted to attribute to these professional unions political positions that were unacceptable to their members. Hence actions were taken in the infrastructures of these unions, and there were clashes in three infrastructures whose vast majority--by means of telegrams they sent to the leadership of the party and to the government--was calling for rescuing these unions from reactionary elements. In the bulletins they issued and signed with their own names, these infrastructures condemned those who violated the laws of the union and violated the honor of the profession and the morals of our society. This was not mere talk. They asked that [those violators] be called to account. The infrastructures condemned those leaders [even] before the government responded to all their demands.

The councils have been dissolved. In a matter of days temporary, statutory leadership councils will be appointed. These councils will protect and keep up with the affairs of the profession. They will make preparations for elections in which the bases of the unions will express their opinions freely.

#### Victims of Acts of Violence

[Question] The western press has also circulated information about hundreds of citizens losing their lives in the recent events. How true is this information?



[Answer] In speaking about Syria in the past months the western press was distinguished by two characteristics: instigation and provocation (on the one hand) and exaggeration (on the other). This was what distinguished what the western press was writing about Syria in the context of the campaign that was being launched against the citizen in Syria to make him despair and lose confidence in his leaders and in his future.

This campaign is still evident on many faces, and it is tied to the foreign pressures that are being practiced against Syria. It is tied to the plan which the Camp David Accords are trying to spread throughout the Arab area in general.

The Communist Party: Democracy for Whom and for What?

The Communist Party was satisfied with answering a limited question about the question of democracy--democracy as a political slogan proclaimed by the forces of the opposition, and democracy as a principal slogan proclaimed by the party, as the party says.

Regarding this question the secretary general of the party, Khalid Bikkash says, "It is not a coincidence that today the reactionary forces are proclaiming democracy as their basic slogan. They are thereby demanding the freedom of work and of action so as to deal a blow to progressive accomplishments, to abolish agrarian reform, to repeal the nationalizations that occurred and to deal a blow to the public sector in the national economy. They even wanted the freedom to publicize al-Sadat's course, etc.

"We, the communists, are advocates of democracy, which is one of the slogans of our party, but democracy is not an abstract concept.

"The question is this: democracy for whom and for what? This question incorporates the national substance with the substance of class. Our reply is this: democracy is [a privilege that exists] in the context of the struggle against colonialism and for social progress.

"We are advocating democratic freedoms for the social forces in whose interests and whose chief ambition is to struggle against colonialism and for social progress. These forces are the working class, the masses of farmers and the revolutionary intellectuals. On this basis, for example, we struggled and we will struggle for a public press for our Syrian Communist Party and for all the forces that are represented in the Progressive National Front.

"The objective of democracy must be to provide the opportunity to expand and to further the role of the vast popular masses and to push their tremendous energies into the national and the class struggle in which our homeland is engaged."

## The Arab League: The Freedom to Conspire Is Not Permitted

The secretary general of the Arab Socialist League, Minister of State for the Affairs of the Council of Ministers Ammar Ramadan acknowledges that freedom of speech does exist in Syria. He distinguishes between the freedom to criticize and the freedom to conspire. Regarding the questions of democracy we had an interview with him which we began by asking him for his opinion about the demand to spread democracy, which the opposition is advocating.

[Answer] The question of democracy is a relative matter. What may be applied properly in one country may not be proper for application in another. In this regard what is applied in the republics of the Soviet Union differs from one republic to another. In Russia there is one [standard of democracy], and in the Ukraine there is another.

In order to stay away from generalizations, let me say that there are some foundations for democracy that must be available, such as the freedom of speech.

[Question] Is there freedom of speech in Syria?

[Answer] Of course freedom of speech does exist. Freedom of speech means the freedom to criticize, but it does not mean the freedom to conspire. There is no regime in the world that would allow [others] to conspire against it.

[Question] The manifesto which the National Front issued last September emphasized the sovereignty of the law. To what extent is the present government committed to implementing this course of the front?

[Answer] Exceptions to the sovereignty of the law constituted one of the aspects of the disarray in a previous time. The present government curbed over 90 percent of these exceptions.

[Question] Was that done with laws?

[Answer] It was done with laws and also with practice. It is of interest to me to point out that the present government has achieved numerous accomplishments, but the fact that questions of security monopolize the interests of citizens renders these accomplishments unable to attract much attention despite their importance.

[Question] What about freedom of the press: I mean permitting the publication of newspapers for the parties of the front?

[Answer] An agreement has been reached to publish a central newspaper that would speak for the parties that are participating in the front and would express their opinions. There is a partisan press, but it exists somehow in an unofficial capacity.

[Question] Is there no intention to turn these newspapers into official newspapers?

[Answer] First, let us see the outcome of publishing a unified newspaper in the name of the front; and we will then see what the ideal form would be in the light of the experiment.

The Unionist Socialist Party Takes Its Course: Why Democracy?

The secretary general of the Unionist Socialist Party confined his talk about the problem of democratic freedoms to [the following] statement:

"We know that democratic freedoms have not taken their natural course in our country and that repressive measures are being taken. But this does not make us ignore the fact that these measures have occurred simultaneously with the assassinations and the foreign interventions. We cannot confront these postures unless we resort to repression and violence. Violence cannot be resisted by persuasion, but rather by violence also."

Yusuf Ju'aydani: Syria Is More Democratic

Yusuf Ju'aydani the minister of labor and social affairs and secretary general of the Socialist Union affirmed that there was not a single Arab nation that had as much democracy as Syria did. He responded to a question about his opinion on the demand for democracy that the opposition was making by saying:

"We are with democracy, and we advocate democracy. There is no one against democracy. But democracy is sometimes a word of truth used to obtain evil [ends]. The statement that is made by some people that there are no freedoms in Syria is an outright lie. There is not an Arab nation that has the democracy that Syria has.

"If we were keeping up with Syrian newspapers, we would have discovered that no region has practiced the right to criticize as it has been practiced in this country. Basically, had there been no freedom, those people who consider themselves among the opposition would not have been able to make their demands. They distribute bulletins and they carry out organizational activities, and no one stands in their way. Furthermore, all the leaders of the leftist opposition are living in Syria, and they have never been harrassed. Had the situation been, as some portray it, one of repression and terror, those people would have been in prison."

Jo'Aviani said [the following] about political detainees:

"Is the regime being asked to release murderers? I do not think that there is a capitalist or a socialist regime that would endorse murder and would agree to the release of murderers. In the most democratic countries a murderer goes to jail. I do not know if there are some people who do not want a prison sentence for those who burned public sector organizations, who placed explosives in front of schools and in universities, who killed scientists, physicians, university professors and ordinary workers! How can we call for the release of such murderers?"

[Question] What about the Emergency Law?

[Answer] This law has been in effect since 1948. It was suspended for a short period of time during the separatist regime, but it was soon put into effect. The law is now related to the state of war with the enemy. All countries that are in a state of war are governed by special laws and not by ordinary laws.

I must refer to the fact that this law was abused for some time. We are opposed to the abuse of this law, but to call for its repeal cannot be explained in a logical fashion.

[Question] What about the press?

[Answer] A decision has been made to publish a newspaper in the name of the front. We in the Socialist Union support [the notion] that each party publish its own newspaper. As far as the existing newspapers are concerned, I have called attention to the freedom to criticize which these newspapers have.

#### The Position Via a Via the Armed Militias

During the Seventh Regional Conference of the Ba'ath Party the conferees, as the communique which they issued indicated, paused in front of various problems from which the country has been suffering. There is no doubt that any government in the world would be concerned with closing the loopholes through which the opposition can infiltrate into the mainstream of life and to the people. It is self-evident to expect that the conference did discuss all the means that are available to deal with the events which Syria has been experiencing.

This was the situation of the National Front and of the popular organizations. Numerous opinions and views were presented so as to remedy the situation politically. However, there are those who think that the crisis was handled with a police approach.

addition, the question of forming armed, popular militias was presented as one of the methods of handling the situation. In fact, measures to form these militias had actually begun a long time ago.

And now, is it true that the police aspect has prevailed over the political aspect in dealing with the crisis?

Why were the armed popular militias formed, and did the process of arming them include the various forces that are participating in the front?

The various forces that have formed a coalition in the context of the National Front have responded to these questions.

We conducted this interview with Ahmad Iskandar Ahmad around these questions that are being raised in the Syrian mainstream.

### The Ba'th Party: Practicing Revolutionary Violence

[Question] Some people think that you are handling the crisis with a police approach whereas it is assumed that it is to be dealt with politically. What do you think about that?

[Answer] I think that the answer to this question was provided in previous answers. But I want to tell you that under circumstances such as those which we are experiencing and in order to confront the challenges that we are confronting, we cannot separate police action from political action. It is a joint and a closely connected action.

[Question] Observers have paused to show special interest in the phenomenon of the popular organizations forming armed militias. Why are these militias being formed when the army you have is a major, organized force?

[Answer] Yes, our army is a major, organized force that inspires pride, and we are proud of it nationally. I believe that any Arab nationalist would be proud of the Syrian Arab army and of its capability. But the formation of the armed popular militias was a matter that was required by a set of imperatives. The most important of these [include]: that our army remain capable at an moment not only of confronting the possibility of a military Israeli aggression, but also of returning the blow with one that would be bigger and stronger; and that these armed popular militias can under any conditions and at any time engage in revolutionary violence to eradicate reactionary elements.

On the other hand some people believed that there was some flaw in the domestic structure in Syria. The regime was accused of weakness and of losing its popularity. We wanted to say that Syria, as it is, is wrong



with its army, Syria is also arming with its national structure, with its national solidarity and with the common front that exists between the leadership and the people. I believe that a regime which arms its masses and places weapons in the hands of the people is a regime that has great confidence in itself and great confidence in its people.

[Question] Do the arming operations include the other factions of the National Front or are they confined to the Ba'th Party and the popular organizations that are led by the Ba'th Party?

[Answer] The process of arming the people in Syria has never been confined to the Ba'thists, but it has rather included the other parties in the Progressive National Front and it has also included all the citizens who believe in the socialist progressive course.

The Socialist Union: Procedure of Arming the People Was Not Widely Used

Anwar Hamadah had positive observations about the police approach. He attributed that approach to the circumstances of the attack that had targeted the country. We had this interview with Hamadah also.

[Question] An announcement has recently been made that armed popular militias were being formed. Has the Socialist Union been included in these arming operations?

[Answer] We did participate somewhat. An armed labor militia was formed in Damascus; it appeared in the recent parade on the 1st of May. We are taking part in the Labor Union of Damascus and our members are in its leadership. We did take part in this militia.

[Question] Then can we now say that there is a progressive national front whose masses are armed?

[Answer] The procedure of arming the people has not been applied to everyone. Basically we thought that it should not be applied to everyone because carrying arms requires more awareness especially since it entails many problems and we do have a good army.

On the subject of the police approach [to the crisis] Hamadah says:

"The fact is that we have to know that conducting a dialogue with those groups that reject a dialogue and insist on resorting to murder and terrorism is futile. I have stated that we proposed a dialogue with all those who were actually opposed to Camp David.

"With regard to the scouring and raiding operations, the state did not have another choice. In the face of a small group of people that is trying to scare, terrify and kill people and turn their lives into a permanent state of anxiety and damage their interests, the state has no other choice but that of eradicating them."

## The Unionist Socialists: Our Party Is Unarmed

Fayiz Iama'il emphasized that he did not know about the subject of arming people. He had his own point of view about the police approach. He said [the following] about arming people and about the armed militias:

"The fact is that we do not know the details about the subject of arming people, but we do know that [that process] included the popular and the trade union sectors. This is all that I know in this field. But we as a party were not armed, nor were we contact at all in this regard."

Regarding the matter of the prevalence of the police approach to the crisis over the political approach, as some see it, Iama'il's point of view seems to be closer to that opinion. In this regard he says:

"In dealing with matters of a political nature we may not resort to repressive measures. There are innumerable methods of dealing with political matters and the last of them would be repression. There are methods which I can call ideological methods, and these basically rely on the principle of communicating with the masses to explain the course in every field."

## Yusuf Ju'aydani: The Compelling Choice

Yusuf Ju'aydani, the minister of labor and secretary general of the Socialist Union thinks that the government was forced to resort to police solutions after all the political solutions had failed with those who had raised their weapons against the citizens. In response to our question he said, "Efforts are in fact being made, but we must emphasize that those who created the crisis placed the regime in front of a specific choice.

"Anyone who kept up with the speeches that the president of the republic made will remember that he gave those who erred a vast opportunity to correct their errors. He also gave those who had not become involved an opportunity so as not to become involved. Finally, he opened the door wide for dialogue. But when some people carried arms to kill, the regime could only resort to a police approach to respond to these crimes."

## Questions of the Class Struggle

Last March while Syrian president Hafiz al-Asad was launching against local reactionaries and against U.S. imperialism the most violent battle he launched since he came to power in October 1970, the delegations of the Ba'th Party and of the other parties that are participating in the National Front were visiting the cities and the regions that experienced disturbances in their political lives. The delegations were meeting with political, trade union, economic and social activists in an attempt to calm conditions down.

At that time it was rumored that the government had tried to appease the bourgeoisie. Furthermore, it was said that the government of Dr 'Abd-al-Ka'uf al-Kasab had basically come to power to appease this bourgeoisie.

These are some of the spheres of the questions of the class struggle in Syria which the crisis imposed or which were imposed because of the crisis.

What are the various forces saying about the serious opinions that were proposed by President al-Asad?

Were these opinions actually put into practice?

What lies behind the formation of the government of Prime Minister al-Kasab, and what does this government represent?

Did it succeed in confronting the questions for which it was formed?

Finally, is it true that the government has retreated in front of pressure from the bourgeoisie? These are the headings to our questions, and here are the texts of those questions and the answers to them.

#### The Ba'th Party: The Government of the Regional Conference

Regarding the ability of the government of Prime Minister al-Kasab to confront the period that followed the outbreak of events, especially since some people believe that the government was formed to confront other functions that are quite different from the police functions, Ahmad Iskandar Ahmad says [the following]:

"If we remember that this government was formed after the sessions of the party's seventh regional conference came to an end and if we were to take into consideration the fact that this government came to carry out the resolutions of this conference, we can reply accurately to this question. The Seventh Conference discussed the possibilities of the situation from all aspects. The conference discussed the situation politically, economically and from a security point of view. The conference looked into all the phenomena in the internal structure, and it also considered all the foreign policy possibilities. The conference took into consideration all the existing and the possible pressures. As a result of this study the conference came out with a specific view and a clear vision [of the situation], and it approved a number of recommendations and resolutions. This government is the outcome of this clear study which the party has approved."

Responding to a question about what the government achieved in the area of fighting administrative corruption, high prices, exploitation and bribery--and these are the questions that were raised by the press of the party, of its organizations and of the National Front--Iskandar says:

"The government has taken great strides so far in implementing the program which it was charged to implement, both in dealing with administrative reform or the imbalance in living standards which is a result of the low salaries and wages and working for the sovereignty of the law so that there would be protection for anyone but that which he gets from his labor, his efficiency and his loyalty to the state and to society.

"These major strides that were made by the government are being completed daily. I can say that the magnitude of what we have done so far places us in a position of feeling optimistic on the basis of realistic factors.

#### **We Will Crush the Reactionaries**

Regarding whether or not the reactionary class forces were exerting pressures on the government to force it to retract some of the economic measures and, accordingly, the government's policy to confront these pressures, Iskandar says:

"First, it is known that we do not respond to pressures, whether they are domestic or foreign. We do not negotiate over what we believe as a matter of principle. We have no hesitation about furthering our socialist course in the country, about crushing all the reactionaries in all shapes and forms and about striking their material and philosophical centers wherever there is a center for those reactionaries.

"From this notion and from this assumption we are adhering to the principles of our course and of our resolutions. We know that any indifference, any hesitation, any weakness will not be reflected negatively on Syria alone, but it will also be reflected negatively on the future of our Arab nation. Because of our strong pan-Arab and national feelings, because we believe strongly in making progress in applying the socialist course and furthering our relations with the liberation forces in the entire world and (because we believe in) increasing the strength of our ideological position, our realization of all these matters forces us not to be indifferent at all on the matter of opposing any group or any element that wants to turn Syria away from its principles or wants to undermine the national fabric of Syrian society."

Regarding his opinion on the fact that some circles of the press have described the government of al-Kasam as the government of openness to the Syrian bourgeoisie, Iskandar says:

"Accuracy is usually assumed in the circles of the press, but these circles which regarded the government of Dr 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Kasam as a government of openness to the Syrian bourgeoisie were not accurate in their conclusions. These circles--and you will forgive me for saying this--were not innocent in making this suggestion. Any government that comes

in Syria is asked to function in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and the laws that are in effect. It was known that the government of Dr al-Kassab came to implement the resolutions of the Seventh Regional Conference of the Socialist Arab Ba'ath Party. This was announced when the government was formed, and this is what the government proved in the statement that it submitted to the People's Assembly.

"It is a government that came [to power] to carry out the resolutions of the party's seventh regional conference--to implement these resolutions as soon as possible and with the least possible errors, since we are not allowed to make errors at all. We are in a battle; we are facing a major challenge. In view of this challenge, we have to keep our vision clear; we have to preserve the soundness of our course; and we must not be deceived by any misleading appearance at all. Most certainly the survival of this government is tied to its ability to implement the resolutions of the seventh regional conference, not over the long range, but as soon as possible and with the greatest measure of efficiency. This government's experience over the past few months since it was formed proves the truth of this statement and gives a very optimistic impression both to the members of our party and to our citizens as well."

Regarding what was said about the fact that the government was compelled to make some concessions to the bourgeoisie during the events in an attempt to appease and neutralize them in the struggle, Iskandar says:

"We have considered the battle in Syria to be between progressive and reactionary [elements]. It was obvious [to determine] who stood with the progressive course and with the patriotic sentiment that is historically known in Syria and who acted against progress and separated themselves from the patriotic sentiment. [The latter], whether they wanted to or not, did tie themselves with the enemies of Syria, with the enemies of the Arab nation and with the enemies of Arab nationalism."

The Socialist Union: Foreign Reactionary Support Has No Effect

There are those who speak with good intentions or with bad intentions--it does not matter--about a contradiction in Syrian policy. It is being said that while campaigns are being launched against imperialism and Arab reactionaries, Syria has been increasing the size of its dependence on the aid that is offered by some Arab countries whose regimes are usually described as conservative or reactionary regimes.

Regarding the effect that the aid which comes from such countries has on Syria's foreign policy Hamadah says:

"First, I do not agree with you about [our] large dependence on foreign aid. I know this well because of my position in the government. This aid does not constitute more than 10 percent, and, consequently, its practical effect is nonexistent. The foreign policy of the National Front is based on the unity of the Arab rank to serve the unity of [our] purpose. This is our Nasirist outlook in the Socialist Union: a unity of purpose that would serve our battle against the Zionists and imperialist enemies and against the Camp David Accords."



[Question] There are those, nevertheless, who believe that Syria is being subjected to reactionary Arab pressures through the aid that is being offered, and there are those who believe that these pressures have tangible results!

[Answer] Syria's foreign policy is well known and obvious. It refutes this belief in a material and a concrete way.

#### The Communist Party: Development in a Socialist Direction

The Syrian Communist Party thinks that the opinions that were proposed by President al-Asad are valuable opinions, and [party members] declare their support of these opinions. In this regard the secretary general of the party, Khalid Bikdash says:

"The opinions that were presented by President Hafez al-Asad pertain basically to Syria's determination to keep up the struggle and to escalate it against Camp David and against the designs of the United States of America, which was described by the president as the bitter enemy of our people. Syria is determined to strengthen and to stimulate the Opposition and Resistance Front; to ensure the rights of the Palestinian Arab people; to strengthen relations with the countries of the socialist organizations, and chief among them is the Soviet Union; and to continue an unmitigated struggle against reactionaries. The workers, the farmers and the revolutionary intellectuals are the backbone of every revolution. There is no place in Syria but for progressive and socialist trends. These are all valuable opinions, and we, the communists, support them, and we will continue our struggle to carry them out and to proceed with them forward."

Regarding whether or not these opinions have actually been put into practice, Bikdash says:

"We, the communists, call the measures and the accomplishments that have taken place in Syria progressive measures and accomplishments. We believe that it is possible to develop some of them so that they would assume a socialist character. For example, the state's sector in the national economy is commonly called the public sector. If measures were taken to strengthen it; to establish it firmly; to expand it; to protect it from the destruction and the plunder of the parasitic bourgeoisie; to save it from the influence of this bourgeoisie, with regard to its efforts to meddle between the market and the consumers; to purge it of saboteurs and of the enemies of progress; to enhance the role of labor in supervising management and production, the public sector can be turned into an important foundation for social progress and for moving into the stage of building socialism."

### Has the Crisis Ended?

And now, having dealt with conditions in Syria in approximately 16,000 words from the points of view of various forces, what conclusion can we make? Specifically, can it be said that the crisis has ended?

Ahmad Iskandar Ahmad says, "We have crushed this action, and we have restored to our society the cohesion that the enemies of this nation do not want [us to have]. We have demonstrated the confidence our people have in themselves and in their leaders. We have enabled our people to defend their gains against any future action. But as the expected foreign pressures on Syria increase and as the possibilities increase for the confrontation between us and the Zionist enemy to develop, we must not think it unlikely that there will be new action and that this action will have a new method and new tools."

He adds, "We are prepared for every contingency. I believe that our people today with their popular organizations and with their armed militias are more vigilant and more capable than they were last year to confront any action regardless of its method."

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CSO: 4802

## MAIN FOREIGN POLICY CONCERNS REVIEWED

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic 17 May 80 p 16

[Text] While the command and the government in Syria remain preoccupied with the process of domestic reform and engaged in efforts to strengthen the national unity in the country, observers think that Syrian officials have given their total attention to the Lebanese problem, to the question of Palestine, to inter-Arab relations and to the conditions in the area. Syrian officials have been following these matters daily.

The principal concerns have been and still are the Lebanese conditions, especially in the light of the fact that Israel has been escalating its conspiracy against Lebanon. [Israel is launching] a genocidal war in South Lebanon, and it is breaking up security in the area whenever the Lebanese approach a national Lebanese reconciliation. Damascus holds the opinion that Lebanon is at present facing numerous and unveiled Israeli attempts to thwart all the positive steps that have so far been completed in Lebanon. In spite of what has been said and of what is being said about the Syrian role in Lebanon, what is evident is that the Syrian role will remain first and foremost one that is directed against Israel and its expansionist ambitions in Lebanon. This is due to the fact that the Lebanese tragedy has overshadowed Camp David and the second Sinai Agreement. As a result of the intense communications that were carried out over the past weeks between Damascus and Beirut, it appeared evident that the ice which had covered the road between the two capitals during the winter had finally melted.

Syrian sources are saying that the positive steps that have been taken recently in Lebanon were very significant steps but that they may not be reflected positively on the total Lebanese and Arab situation unless they were used as an introduction to a sincere effort that would be made for Lebanon and for its future. These sources added that regarding these steps as merely measures for relaxing tensions would mean depriving Lebanon of an effective weapon by which it can impose its sovereignty and regain its well-being.

These sources expected conspiracies in Lebanon to increase in the light of what they described as "al-Sadat's drama of postponing the autonomy

talks." The sources considered that postponement an attempt to dodge facing "the responsibility of having conspired against the Palestinian people." They considered it an attempt to give the Israelis an opportunity to arrange their deteriorating affairs and an attempt to give the Americans an opportunity to maneuver among the Arabs after President Carter announced in Philadelphia that his administration was seeking "a more comprehensive and a more general settlement in the Middle East."

In this regard it has also been noted that Damascus refrained from commenting on Vance's resignation and on the appointment of Muskie. But the government newspaper, OCTOBER, came out with the headline that quoted what Muskie had said in the past when he visited the occupied Golan: "If I were an Israeli, I would never return the Golan Heights to Syria."

President al-Asad had violently and repeatedly attacked the United States, describing it as the Arab's principal enemy. He had commended the Soviet Union again and again, proclaiming that Syria would further the socialist course and would increase its cooperation with the Soviets. As a result several diplomatic sources in Damascus have been wondering how far Syria would go in its hostility to the United States and in actually furthering its relations with Moscow because this would affect the area and the strategic balance between the two superpowers. A high-level Syrian official affirmed that his country would never sign a friendship and cooperation agreement with the Soviet Union, but that President al-Asad would (also) never forget the easy military terms that the Soviets gave Syria.

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CSO: 1802

# LAWS TO IMPLEMENT RESOLUTIONS OF PEOPLES' CONGRESSES ANTICIPATED

Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 19 May 80 pp 1, 22

[Article by Michel Nimri: "Syrian Laws To Be Issued Soon To Implement Resolutions of People's Congresses; Communist Party Arms Itself Against Terrorist Operations"]

[Text] Informed Syrian sources have affirmed that the Regional Command of the Ba'th Party and the Syrian government are continuing their study of the proposals that were issued by the emergency congresses of the popular organizations in Syria. These conferences were held last March and April. The proposals are being considered so that these resolutions may be implemented.

The same sources stated that the new Agrarian Reform Law, which was issued by President Hafez al-Asad on the 16th of May and which requires a reduction of the maximum holdings of agricultural land in Syria by between 10 and 25 percent of the maximum that was in effect before the law was issued, comes as a response to the recommendation that was made by the Farmers' Union in the farmers' emergency conference at which President al-Asad spoke.

Al-Asad had declared at that emergency conference that the resolutions which will be issued by the conference would constitute laws that would be enforced in the country.

These informed Syrian sources affirm that a series of laws will be issued in the near future and that these laws will be based on the resolutions of the conferences of the popular organizations. The representation of the popular organizations in the Central Command of the Progressive National Front is also expected to grow.

## Arming the Parties of the Front

On the other hand it has been noticed that there were armed elements in the offices of the Syrian Communist Party, which is led by Khalid Bakdash, for the purposes of protecting these offices from terrorist operations.



Terrorist actions were not [considered] unlikely especially after the assassination of two party members in the city of Aleppo late last April and early in May.

Whereas officials in the Syrian Communist Party are saying that all the measures have been taken to protect the leaders, the staff and the members of the party, sources close to government circles are saying that the Ba'th Party has made a decision regarding arming the Syrian Communist Party. If this is true, this party would have been the first Arab communist party that is being legally armed.

Along the same lines Anwar Hamadah, the minister of state for the affairs of the Syrian Council of Ministers and the secretary general of the Arab Socialist Union said that his party had participated in the armed labor militia which appeared with its weapons for the first time in the people's parade that came out on the 1st of May on the occasion of Labor Day.

Hamadah estimates that about 40 workers who are members of the Socialist Union are participating in this militia.

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CSO: 4802

## SYRIA

### COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS REFLECTS BAKDASH

Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 4 Jun 80 p 11

[Article: "Syrian Communist Party Reelects Bakdash Secretary General and Approves New Bylaws"]

[Text] The Syrian Communist Party has reelected Khalid Bakdash secretary general and Yusuf Faysal assistant secretary general. The party has also approved new bylaws.

In a statement distributed yesterday in Beirut about the agenda of the party's fifth conference, which was held in Damascus between 29 and 31 May, mention was made of the fact that the conference did complete its agenda and did approve it unanimously. This agenda was [as follows]:

1. The report of the Central Committee.
2. The examination procedures of the party's program.
3. The new draft bylaws
4. Electing the leading groups: the Central Committee and the Control Committee.

The statement stated that the conference was attended by 177 actual delegates and by 21 observers. The statement added that the report of the Central Committee, which was submitted by Bakdash, had dealt with the activities of the Central Committee during the period between the fourth and the fifth conferences. The report had dealt especially with the major questions. Among them were the events in Lebanon, the [party's] position on the U.S. imperialist policy in the area, the domestic situation, the developments that came over the Arab Liberation Movement and the international situation, and also the situation inside the party.

The statement stated that this report "will play a major role in strengthening the cooperation of the nationalist and progressive forces in Syria. [It will also play a major role in rallying the popular masses around the national and

international policy of the party so as to protect and strengthen national independence, to strengthen Syria's resistance and to further the bonds of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union."

The statement mentioned that the conference discussed the report of the Central Committee on the introduction of the examination procedures that are being proposed to the party's program which was presented by the assistant secretary general of the party, Yusuf Faysal. The conference approved these examination procedures unanimously.

The conference also discussed the report of the Central Committee on the draft bylaws; the report was presented by Ibrahim Bakri. The conference approved the new bylaws unanimously.

The statement stated that the conference elected a new Central Committee by secret ballot. The committee met immediately [after the conference] and reelected Khalid Bakdash secretary general and Yusuf Faysal assistant secretary general.

The statement mentioned that the conference "listened with considerable interest to all the laudatory remarks that were made to proclaim solidarity with the Syrian Communist Party and the Syrian people in the struggle against Camp David and against the domestic reactionary conspiracies and the crimes of murderous gangs. The conference applauded Syria's role and its defiant position and it commented on conditions and movements in the country."

The statement stated that the conference had sent a message of fraternal solidarity to the families of party members who had lost their lives when they were shot in Aleppo by the bullets of the gang of the [Moslem] Brothers.

The statement added that "Resolutions of solidarity have been made with the Afghan Revolution, with the Iranian Revolution and with the Cuban Revolution. Greetings to the Iraqi Communist Party and to the Egyptian Nationalist Movement were also sent."

The statement mentioned that the conference hailed Khalid Bakdash on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of his joining the Syrian Communist Party.

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CSO: 4802

## BRIEFS

MILITARY EXERCISE COMPLETED SATISFACTORILY--Damascus--On March 29, a formation of the Syrian armed forces carried out a practical exercise with live ammunition using different kinds of land and air weapons. The exercise was carried out in one of the districts of Damascus with the cooperation of paratrooper units. President Hafiz al-Asad, Minister of Defense Mustafa Talas and Col Rif'at al-Asad, commander of the defense squads, were present. An official source stated that the units which participated in the exercise were able to carry out successfully the combat mission with which they were charged after destroying the presumed enemy. The source said that President al-Asad had asked the fighters at the end of the exercise to be always at a level of combat capability that would enable them to engage successfully in combat for the purpose of liberating the occupied lands and achieving victory over the usurping enemy. Brig Gen Talas praised the leaders of this exercise and those who carried it out on their good use of the advanced equipment and on the successful execution of the exercise. Col Rif'at al-Asad said that the Syrian armed forces were capable of opposing the vicious attack that seeks to damage Syria's resistance and to restrict it to the course of capitulation. [Text] [Beirut AL-DIFA' AL-'ARABI in Arabic 8 May 80 p 9] 8592

CSO: 4802

TUNISIA

LAST POLITICAL PRISONERS DUE FOR RELEASE

LD311143 Paris LE MONDE in French 31 Jul 80 p 5

[Dispatch by Michel Deure: "Tunisia--President Bourguiba Orders Release of Six Marxist-Leninist Students"]

[Text] Tunis--It has been learned from well-informed sources that the last Tunisian political prisoners serving sentences imposed on them because of their political views are to be released very soon. Following the conditional discharge of 6 of them, only 7 are still in jail, including 2 trade unionists who were arrested after the 26 January 1978 riots, whereas there were more than 100 prisoners at the beginning of the year.

President Bourguiba, who is now celebrating his 77th birthday at Skanes in Sahel, received on Tuesday six students (Mohamed Hassen Kilani, Hamma Hammani, Moncef Ali Hadj Amor Hassen, Ali Abdesselam Megdiche, Mohamed Dhalou Maali and Abdeluabbar Youssefi). Members of the Marxist-Leninist group "El Amel Et Tounsi" (The Tunisian Worker) to personally inform them that they are to be released. They were sentenced in 1975 to 7-9 years' imprisonment for offences against state security and were not, therefore, to be released before 1982-1984.

Simultaneously with this measure, which was preceded by similar measures on 30 March, 1 May and 1 June 1980, it has been learned that several members of the Tunisian opposition living abroad have been able to obtain passports and have either returned or are getting ready to return to their country.

All opposition movements have been asking for the release of these prisoners for several years. Furthermore, they would like a general amnesty proclaimed. These releases should to some degree contribute further to the improvement in the political atmosphere which has become apparent in the past 4 months and help to achieve a new political and social consensus which Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali appears to favor.

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114



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